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NAME OF AUTHOR/NOM DE L'AUTEUR

ROB. SANDS.

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NAME OF SUPERVISOR/NOM DU DIRECTEUR DE THÈSE

DR GARRY SMITH

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A SOCIAL SURVEY OF FORMER OUTSTANDING  
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES

by



ROB T. SANDS

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
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EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend  
to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a  
thesis entitled A SOCIAL SURVEY OF FORMER OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL  
ATHLETES, submitted by Rob T. Sands in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

.....*Henry J. Smith*.....  
Supervisor

.....*W. H. Scott*.....  
.....*K. R. Cunningham*.....

Date .....*21<sup>st</sup> July '75*.....

## ABSTRACT

The study was an exploratory attempt to determine the former outstanding male high school athlete's role in sport, particularly after high school. The central points of interest revolved around the athlete's high school sporting career, the frequency and reasons for continuing or discontinuing after high school, and any re-adjustment problems for those who decided to discontinue their former high school sport.

The athlete's high school career was examined to determine the influence of family social status, significant others, personal aspirations, and personal sacrifices, on the development of the athlete's sporting career after high school. The value of inter-school sport was also assessed. Evaluation of the athlete's sporting orientations after high school focused on the influence of such socio-psychological variables as marriage, occupation, scholarly pursuits, personal ambitions, influence of others, and current attitudes toward and involvement in, his former high school sport. Special interest was also directed toward the re-adjustment to a non-sporting life for those former outstanding high school athletes who may have discontinued their high school sport.

The data was collected from personal and telephone interviews, or mail questionnaires, which involved 153 former outstanding high school athletes from all\* Public and Separate schools in Edmonton.

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\*See Chapter 3



The criteria for selection of the sample involved the nomination of former outstanding athletes in basketball and/or football in the years from 1969 to 1972 by the head of the Physical Education Department and/or coach in each high school. The research instrument was a two part questionnaire designed to investigate the role of sport in the former outstanding high school athlete's life.

The findings of this study generally demonstrated that while at high school, the outstanding athlete had a strong desire to become a champion athlete, was greatly influenced by his coach in sporting matters, thoroughly enjoyed his sport, and valued the social interaction associated with interschool sport.

After graduation, the former outstanding high school athlete turns away from sport as a central interest, and concentrates more on scholarly and occupational pursuits. Attendance at a post high school institution was found to be related to the continuance of the athlete in sport, while occupational interests seemed to restrict the activity of the athlete in his former high school sport. Family social status appeared to have no significant effect on the athletes' decision to continue or discontinue, and it was found that the upward social mobility potential, associated with sports success, did not materialize for lower social class athletes. Further, expectancy to become a champion while at high school was not a major factor in the athletes' decision to continue after high school.

A small majority of athletes discontinued their former high school sport and, as a result of this, reduced their interest in their former sport. This finding showed that they did not hold the same degree

and intensity of affiliation to their former sport as did the continuing athletes. Problems associated with re-adjustment of the athlete to a life-style void of participation in their former high school sport were found to be negligible. This was credited to the relative lack of social status granted the athlete in high school, and because the athlete still indulged in other sporting interests after high school, in which his psychic demands for self-worth were satiated.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

. . . An athlete - any athlete, but especially a famous one - carries everywhere an indefinable resource, a certain glow that can only be dimmed by his ceasing to be an athlete. This resource, tangentially the inheritance of fame or talent, may be real or illusory. In the eyes of non-athletes, however, the athlete is different. He is a privy of certain mysteries that elevate him. He is blessed in a world of the unblessed (Jordan, 1975, p. 76). . . .

Autobiographies and case studies featured in such media as magazine articles, journals, newspapers and stage plays are currently high-lighting the loss of prestige and personal trauma of former outstanding athletes who have had to readjust their lifestyles after many years of recognition, status, and idolization at College and professional levels of sport. Reduced to relative anonymity, former champion athletes have had many problems to face once they have departed from the sporting scene. These problems are cleverly portrayed in Miller's (1972) stage play "That Championship Season." The reunion of former high school athletes in the play accentuates and provides the enzymic force to describe the problems underlying the non-participation of these athletes. Phil takes the role of one of the athletes in Miller's (1972) play who displays a feeling of uncertainty, lack of desire and nostalgia.

Who cares! Do I really care? I'm so bored half the time it's killing me . . . Bored. Sometimes I get on the turnpike and just drive till I feel like getting off. . . . What's left? Hit a few bars, some music, drink, play old basketball games over in my head . . . Mostly sit and replay the good games in my head, believe that? (Miller, 1972, p. 35).

Other problems for former athletes as portrayed in the mass media include a loss of identity, marital instability, lack of physical fitness, and the desire to return to sport, which in turn induces tension, psychological let-downs and loss of friends.

University sport on the North American continent is the predominant avenue in providing both Canada and the United States with its potential athletic national champions. These Universities provide the opportunities through their sporting programs for a small percentage of former outstanding high school athletes to further their athletic careers. Those athletes who do not attend a University are limited in their chances of becoming acclaimed. Most play in minor leagues which are usually of a lower standard than University. It is here that ambitions to become nationally recognized are diminished. The challenge to improve to national calibre is reduced because of the loss of desire due to a lower competition, other interests impinging on training time, and less recognition. If this supposition is substantiated by the present study, then there appears to be a large number of athletes who are not pursuing their potential ability. What are the reasons for this hypothesized loss of motivation?

The high school environment provides opportunities in sport for outstanding athletes; what is not known however, is whether or not these athletes have adjustment problems following their high school athletic careers. That is, in school systems which reward athletes, are there negative repercussions for the athlete when his status is suddenly changed as a result of non participation after high school? Also, if such a problematic outcome does prevail, then the



implications of increased recognition at high school are especially salient because of the transitional stage these athletes are going through in terms of personality development. Thus, the evaluation of the high school athletes' sporting career and attitudes after high school, can provide important answers to the following questions.

Does the individual former outstanding high school athlete feel there is any value in competing in inter-school sport; if so, what are the values; if not, what are the ramifications? Many former athletes and sports sociologists claim that athletes tend to live in a world that is different from their everyday life - a type of fantasy world - they are idolized, patronized, and catered for in most of their desires. Is the high school athlete similar? Does he play his sport in an insular environment; an environment which is unreal? That is, are the attitudes, behaviours and values stressed in high school athletics functional only for high school life? Is it as Coleman (1961) infers that athletes do not place as much importance on athletics after high school as they did during high school? Therefore, is high school a passing phase as far as sport is concerned? Does sport hold the same magnetism after high school; if not, why not? What are the emerging priorities after high school?

Status in the mainstream of society creates problems for those who are attempting and those who have attained positions of prestige. Does the status associated with being a former outstanding high school athlete lead to undue pressures which are difficult to cope with?

The high school appears to provide a large array of pervasive sources of influence for the individual. Therefore, what is the role of the school environment, "significant others" and school athletics

in shaping athletic aspirations, future attitudes and life-style for the outstanding athlete?

The role of the outstanding athlete after high school needs assessing. What effect does the attainment of achievement and/or self-fulfillment in one area (occupation and/or scholarly pursuit) have on the achievement in another area (sport)? Are there real problems of adjustment in the life-styles of former outstanding high school athletes?

What are the major influences on the outstanding athletes' sporting career once leaving high school, and do the athletes feel it has been worthwhile striving to be an accomplished football player and/or basketball player?

Athletes, especially outstanding athletes, should attest to the positive values in sport if such values exist. In turn, this should be reflective of the value of the interschool sports system in general. If there are any values, these outstanding athletes would be the most likely to receive and benefit from them.

The questions presented above are implicitly aimed at exploring the athletes' sporting environment both while he is at high school and after high school. The major area of concern involved the explanation of the variables associated with continuance, but the sport specific sub-culture and environment surrounding scholarly or job orientations may produce a valuable insight as to why the athlete eventually pursues one course of action as opposed to another.

### THE PROBLEM

The central purpose of the study was to analyze the role of sport in the lives of former outstanding high school athletes in the Edmonton area. The analysis attempted to survey two general dimensions of the athletes' sporting life. One specifically analyzed the sporting environment, influences and attitudes toward sport at high school, and the other pursued the consequent interest, influences and direction of the individuals' sporting career after high school.

Within the first dimension - the high school sporting environment; the study primarily attempted to determine:

1. the significant reasons for the development of the individual's athletic career at high school;
2. the development of self-concept and athletic status of the individual at high school;
3. the value(s) to the individual outstanding athlete of competing in inter-school sport.
4. the perceived influence on the lifestyle of the athlete by the coach at high school;
5. the perceived part played by the coach in the athlete's high school athletic success;
6. self-assessed benefits of being an outstanding athlete at high school;
7. the perceived enjoyment from participating in high school sport.

The second dimension; the post-high school sporting environment, attempted to focus on the general background and specific reasons for continuing or discontinuing after high school, as well as the significant differential reasons for variables of interest in regards to the continuing/discontinuing, football/basketball and job/study dichotomies. Any problems faced by the respondents in conjunction with their sporting orientations, was also assessed.

The study further determined the relationship between continuing/discontinuing and high school related variables, as well as the relationship between variables occurring after high school.

Therefore, the study attempted to discover if a relationship existed between the following variables:

1. desire to become a champion while at high school and continuance after high school.
2. self-perception of athletic ability at high school and continuance after high school.
3. encouragement received from others at high school and continuance after high school.
4. family social status and continuance after high school.
5. scholarly pursuits and/or occupational endeavours after high school and continuance after high school.
6. the expressed current feelings toward the specific sport after high school, and discontinuance after high school.

## JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The value and practical importance of the study is based on the need to:

1. indicate what has become of former outstanding high school athletes after high school.

2. determine if these outstanding high school athletes have had pleasureable experiences in their sport, both at high school and/or afterwards. On the basis that these experiences may not have been pleasureable, suggestions for pertinent changes in the particular sporting environment may be forthcoming.

3. determine if an overemphasis of athletic status and recognition is being perpetuated by the interschool sporting system in Edmonton's high schools. Non-recognition after high school for those that have discontinued, may create problems of readjustment. This potential finding may require and/or lead to suggestions for change.

4. Evaluate the impact of occupation and/or scholarly pursuit of the individual's athletic career. If the athletes are found to discontinue in significant numbers, this may necessitate the need to suggest appropriate methods for readjusting to an activity-reduced lifestyle, therefore, avoiding potential problems which may be attributed to discontinuance.

5. provide athletic agencies with data supporting the drop-out rate of potential outstanding athletes in at least one Canadian city.



6. determine if the outstanding athletes value interschool sport.

#### LIMITATIONS

The study is limited in that:

1. The study lacks a control group for a more varied and comparative statistical approach.
2. The interpretation of "outstanding" was dealt with individually by each Physical Education teacher.
3. The retrospectivity of the study may influence the results. That is, the coach's/physical education teacher's recall of outstanding athletes, and the memory of the respondent, may limit the findings.
4. The data and conclusions will only represent Edmonton and cannot be generalized to the entire Canadian population.

#### DELIMITATIONS

The study is delimited in that:

1. The study is confined to football and basketball, the two most popular interschool male sports in Edmonton's Public and Separate schools.
2. The criteria for acceptance as an outstanding athlete is that the individual athlete graduated from high school during the years 1969-1972 inclusive, and that the individual competed in the relevant senior school team for a minimum of two years.

3. The respondents were determined to be "outstanding at high school" by the individual Head of Physical Education and/or Coach at each Public and Separate school in Edmonton.

4. The testing was conducted over a period of five months by the use of personal and telephone interviews, and where necessary, mail questionnaires. The type of method utilized was determined by the accessibility of the respondent. It should be noted that for both the personal and telephone interviews, the complete replication of the survey items on the mail questionnaire was the adopted procedure.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature is presented in two major sections. The first section will deal specifically with socio-psychological theory. This section is presented for the purpose of establishing a conceptual framework from which the role of the outstanding athlete can be analyzed. The second section refers to previous studies generated in the area of sport sociology.

### REVIEW OF SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY

#### Introduction

The socio-psychological theory presented in this section has been divided into separate categories for easier comprehension. However, as each of these theories and concepts are involved on a human level, and because they are not demarcated in reality, it should be noted that roles, status, achievement motivation, incentives, the group, and the self, are in fact, mutually interdependent.

#### Groups

Macro and micro approaches to sociological analyses are currently used as a means of describing and explaining social behaviour. At the micro level, groups are deemed to be an inherent and important part of the general social system; especially the high school system. The most noticeable groups that are in existence at the high schools are those formed on a grade, and more

particularly, class basis. It is within these class levels that the athletic sub-culture exists; an existence as another group in its own right, but one that cuts across all class levels.

In general terms, Parsons (1959)\* describes the function of the school class as serving "both an agent of socialization for adult roles and for allocation . . . of the age cohort which do and do not go to college" (p. 28). Parsons (1959)\* also perceives the main differentiation within the school class to be that of achievement, as it provides the opportunity for achieved status.

The group is a plurality of individuals, interests, beliefs, tasks and territories, (Olmsted, 1968) and its function is to provide the individual with a source of social interaction and support (Homans, 1950) (Secord and Backman, 1964) (Olmsted, 1968) (Vinacke, 1969) (Glaser and Strauss, 1971).

Group properties such as leadership, structure, cohesiveness, status, and pressures, exert influences not apparent or readily seen in a two-person interaction (Secord and Backman, 1964) (Vinacke, 1969). The group also aids in the psychic life of the individual, especially when it is the primary group that is involved. Such a group is defined as primary because of the continuous and direct interaction of participants within the group (Olmsted, 1968).

Sociometry studies have aided the formation of interpersonal attraction theories and in the analyses of social influences of the group. Newcomb's (1961) theory of interpersonal attraction states that persons with similar attitudes are attracted to one another.

Another interpersonal attraction theory is that presented by Winch (1958) called the theory of complementary needs. This theory states that persons will be like others whose characteristics, behavioural and otherwise, aid them in maintaining congruency with self. A further theory is the exchange theory of attraction as proposed by Homans (1961) in which he attempted to explain social behavior in terms of the rewards exchanged and the costs incurred in interaction.

Social influence is one aspect of group interaction which has been investigated, and accordingly categorized by Kelman (1961). The three processes Kelman (1961) describes are firstly, compliance; whereby the individual accepts influence because of the desire to attain specific rewards. Secondly, identification, in which the individual adopts group behavior in an attempt to produce a satisfying, self-defining relationship to a person within a group. Thirdly, internalization. This process occurs when an individual accepts influence because the induced behaviour is congruent with his value system.

#### Roles and Status Within the Group

Wilson (1971) states that a role is:

a commonly held set of expectations as to how persons occupying a given position in the social structure may be expected to perform. From a psychological perspective, the role is seen as the particular way in which the person plays his part. From a social perspective it is the pattern of behaviour peculiar to the part (p. 670).

Secord and Backman (1964) stress that every social role has others to which it is related, and together, related social roles make up a system or structure within which persons interact. Every



individual has a number of roles, not always compatible, and they are associated with various positions (Statuses) in the structure of the group (Wilson, 1971).

Social behaviour inevitably involves the process of comparison; a comparison of self-worth compared to the group. Therefore, role and status description become intertwined. Status "is the worth of a person as estimated by a group or a class of persons." (Secord and Backman, 1964, p. 294).

Wilson (1971) applies a slightly different interpretation. Status is "a position . . . where a person stands in the group structure." (p. 671).

Status arises from interaction and is seen as the capacity of a person for rewarding those with whom he interacts, the extent to which he is seen as receiving awards, the type of costs he incurs, and his investments (Secord and Backman, 1964).

The properties of social status are identified by Glaser and Strauss (1971), who contend that social status is regularized, scheduled, prescribed, desirable, inevitable, reversible, and repeatable. The degree of desirability of a status passage depends both on the degree to which a man is socially integrated into groups and on the social circumstances that may provide such desirable passages. Desirability also assists in the molding of "new passages." These "new passages" emerge when a new and desirable interest takes priority over current central passages (Glaser and Strauss, 1971).

Homans (1950) contends that the higher the rank of the person within a group, the more nearly his activities conform to the norms of the group, the wider will be his range of expectations and the number

of persons that originate interaction for him either directly or through intermediaries.

Social class, status, and upward mobility are discussed by Rosen (1959), McClelland (1961), Turner (1970), Ellis (1970), and Kerckhoff (1972). The socialization process, particularly within the family, reflects social class values. In regards to child rearing practices, Kerckhoff (1972) reports from various studies, that middle-class parents emphasize "internal" qualities in child-rearing such as consideration, curiosity, and initiative. Middle-class parents seem more likely than working-class parents to use explanatory responses. They place greater concern for the child to set his own standards of behaviour when compared to working-class parents.

Turner (1970) analyzed the type of job of the father and its effect upon his sons' socialization. The trend showed that middle-class fathers were more achievement-oriented; probably as a result of the entrepreneurial type of job they pursued. Rosen (1959) also found middle-class children to have higher achievement motivation than children at lower levels. The same author concluded from his studies, that middle-class small families were particularly orientated towards status driving and upward mobility. Parents stress planning, achievement and competition with standard of excellence, and rivalry with peers and siblings. McClelland (1961) reports a different finding, in which it was inferred that boys with a higher need-Achievement are apt to be more upwardly mobile in society, particularly if they are at a fairly low level of socio-economic level to start with.

The three-way relationship among social class, academic performance and achievement motivation led Rosen (1956) to believe that students who have a high achievement motivation tend to come from higher social levels and perform better in schools. Rosen (1956) also found that students who have the ability to work independently and persistently toward their goals perform better academically. Such students also came more often from higher status families.

Research into motivation and intelligence interaction was also undertaken by Ellis (1970). The results indicated that the chances of creating educational advantages which make mobility possible, and then being able to capitalize on these advantages, increase directly as a function of measured intellectual ability. In turn, the precursors for upward mobility include dissatisfaction with one's present lot in life, a need for achievement in which middle-class goals are defined as desirable, and that the mobile individual must perceive these goals as feasible . . . "a level of expectation that makes the aspired objectives seem reachable." (Ellis, 1970, p. 54).

Studies reported in Kerckhoff (1972) reveal that lower-class students may become educationally deprived. For example, lower-class adolescents drop out of school earlier than other social classes (Miller, Saleem, and Herrington, 1964), and the lower the social origin, the lower the average level of educational attainment (Eckland, 1964).

Further investigation into social class and social mobility indicates that "significant others" as role models, must be present in the immediate environment of the adolescent if educational attainment is to eventuate. The observed important role models enabling lower-class youth to use higher education as a mobility channel, focus on such entities as parents, teachers, and peers (Parsons, 1959) (Coleman, 1961) (Freisen, 1969) (Ellis, 1970).

### Motivation

The complexity of human behaviour is portrayed in the interdependency of the following concepts dealt with under the general concept of motivation. Each impinges upon the other, and each contributes to an understanding or explanation of the process of motivation. The concepts include incentive, referent groups, role models, reinforcement, expectancy, and role discontinuity.

Birch and Veroff (1966) determine that activity is the basic unit involved in the analyses of motivation. Activity or behavioural tendencies are two-phased; instrumental, which precedes and makes possible the goal, and consummatory behaviour which is goal achievement. Birch and Veroff (1966) also suggest that all individuals have a number of behavioural tendencies operating at the same time, but the strongest set of tendencies competing at a given moment will be evoked as an activity. Thus, a person appears to rationalize in order to maximize gains and minimize losses. This principle of action theory proposed by Birch and Veroff (1966), and based on prior experiences of the individual, has often been termed as "psychological hedonism."



Other theorists, as cited in Birch and Veroff (1966), and Alderman (1974), provide different orientations. Freud (1915) postulates unconscious psychological behaviour as a motivator of activity. Hull's (1943) theory of learning is based on primary and secondary drives.

His theory is summarized by Alderman (1974), who says that:

Hull like other behaviourists assumed that reward was essential for learning - that learning occurs when drive states are reduced by satisfying the needs that create them (p. 36).

Tolman (1938) identified biological deprivation as the determinant of activity, while Maslow's (1970) position on personality indicates a dynamic effort on behalf of the individual to realize or actualize his inherent potential. Alderman (1974) reflects on this view by stating that:

. . . Maslow's theory is not the typical 'drive-reduction' theory of human behaviour. The goals themselves are emphasized rather than the reduction of tension associated with the driver towards these goals (Alderman, 1974, p. 161).

The concept of competence proposed by White (1959) is an attempt to add another dimension to motivational understanding. The organism's capacity to interact effectively in its environment has a motivational effect, and the motivation needed to attain competence cannot be wholly derived from sources of energy conceptualized as drives or instincts. White (1959) stated that:

Obviously there are no consummatory acts; satisfaction would appear to lie in the arousal and maintaining of activity rather than its decline toward bored passivity (p. 59).



The sources of instrumental activity are determined by Birch and Veroff (1966) to be availability, expectancy, incentive, and motive. Availability is an historical factor couched in the concept of habit; a course of action which is dependent upon habits of the individual in similar situations.

The anticipatory quality of social interaction is important because it guides the behaviour of an individual. "He anticipates how the other person might react to his various actions and shapes his behaviour accordingly" (Secord and Backman, 1964, p. 454). Positive or negative self-worth is accrued by the individual on the basis of past associations (Birch and Veroff, 1966). These past associations tend to generate self-fulfilling prophecies which in turn initiate positive or negative expectations (Orlick, 1974) (Scott, 1973). In a related analysis of achievement and expectancy, McClelland (1961) claimed that expectations by others directly influences achievement motivation.

#### Incentive Systems

The developing organism confronts a number of incentive systems which are classified as being either asocial or social in nature (Birch and Veroff, 1966). The asocial incentive systems include sensory, curiosity and achievement, while the social incentive systems are affiliation, aggression and independence.

Incentive can be either an attraction or repulsion. It is positive for an organism engaging in activities which establish and maintain contact with the consequences, and negative for the removal of contact with the consequences (Birch and Veroff, 1966).

### Asocial Incentive

The sensory incentive system is expressed in Freud's (1915) account of instincts, and more particularly "libido"; the sexual source of energy for impulses.

Birch and Veroff (1966) also explain curiosity goal attainment in which the goal activity is characterized by its focus on perceiving changes in stimulation, and by its very nature, is linked to avoidance of boredom.

The achievement incentive system relates to the successful completion of the goal with standards of excellence applied to an organism's performance (Birch and Veroff, 1966). Heckhausen (1967) presents a similar definition of achievement motivation. He defines it as:

the striving to increase, or to keep as high as possible one's own capability in all activities in which a standard of excellence is thought to apply, and where the execution of such activities can, therefore, either succeed or fail (pp. 4-5).

Potential motivation has to be aroused by situational cues, especially valence and motive arousal (Heckhausen, 1967). Valence refers to the attractiveness to the individual of the setting, while motive arousal is the strength of desire to participate in relation to the setting. In conjunction, potential motivation and ability to function, is determined by a number of other factors. These include, talent and acquired abilities, cognitive styles of functioning; fatigue, sensory deprivation and social isolation;

height of activation, and the nature of the task.

An economically-oriented interpretation of achievement motivation is presented by McClelland (1961). In his treatise, McClelland (1961) claims that the extent of motivation aroused is a joint function of the probability of goal attainment and the incentive value or the amount of satisfaction accompanying the attainment of that goal.

#### Social Incentive

Social incentive is defined by Birch and Veroff (1966) "as the attraction to another organism in order to feel reassured from the other that one is acceptable" (p. 65). If the organism is perceived as similar to oneself, then, according to Birch and Veroff (1966), the attraction and reassurance is enhanced.

Social incentive is also explored in Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison which stems from the idea that within the human organism, there exists a drive to evaluate his own opinions, abilities and emotions. This self-evaluation may produce the social incentive required to participate; but only if it is a positive self-evaluation (Scott, 1973). In parallel with Festinger's (1954) theory, Alderman (1974) identifies three major affiliative dimensions in sport as being a fear of social isolation, need for self-evaluation, and the availability of gaining self-esteem through affiliation.

#### Level of Aspiration and Incentive

Explicit goal setting in terms of choices and decisions is used as a synonym for level of aspiration (Heckhausen, 1967).

External references and absolute standards of excellence are especially important in determining levels of aspiration in ambiguous achievement settings, and internal and relative standards of excellence are applied to performance when it is clear what a person can attain (Birch and Veroff, 1966).

Setting the level of aspiration becomes an important process; not only from the viewpoint of acting as an incentive itself, but because it means that successful performance may become an important end in its own right, rather than a means towards other ends (Alderman, 1974). On superior athletes and the level of aspiration, Alderman (1974) states:

. . . One would naturally expect superior athletes, or individuals with superior athletic potential to be interested only in those tasks of high difficulty. . . . One would also expect such individuals to have a high need for achievement. If these two assumptions are valid, then it would appear that, in the McClelland schema, athletes and their performances have to be explained in terms of two situational variables, the expectancy and incentive value of success (p. 213).

Discrepancy between expectation and actual attainment of the original goal is discussed by Birch and Veroff (1966). When a goal is set and the discrepancy is small or non-existent, positive incentive occurs. Conversely, if a large discrepancy occurs because of non-attainment of the goal, then negative incentive is likely to occur.

#### Characteristics of High Achievers

The characteristics of high achievers, in the study of motivation and incentive, have been identified by Atkinson (1958) and McClelland (1961). These authors state that high achievers are typically middle class, and as such, appear more active in the



community, are more resistant to social pressures, and do better in tasks which are challenging to them. High achievers also tend to perceive their probability of success greater than do low achievers, but based on knowledge of past experiences, do not overestimate the probability of success. Highly motivated people are more likely to postpone gratification and tend to view new tasks with confidence (Heckhausen, 1967). People with the high need-Achievement are taking moderate risks; setting themselves a task in which they would actually gain most achievement satisfaction (McClelland, 1961).

#### Criteria for Achievement

The criteria for achievement are expressed by McClelland (1961). Highly motivated achievers perform better with positive feedback. These individuals have an "inner concern" with doing something well and strive to achieve or surpass some standard of excellence. Family environment is another important criterion. Both mothers and fathers with high need-Achievement set higher standards of excellence for their children than mothers and fathers of boys with low need-Achievement. Further, need-Achievement is positively associated with mesomorphy; enabling the individual to attain early success experiences and to surmount challenges or risks more successfully. McClelland (1961) also indicates that children of middle-class background may find that failure is sufficient to arouse their drive to achieve because they recognize the long range significance of achievement in terms of deprivation of possible future rewards. Birch and Veroff (1966) claim that the three



response systems as criteria for achievement are, competence, sense of effectiveness, and sexual identity.

#### Level of Activation and Incentive

Level of activation or the consistency model proposed by Fiske and Maddi (1968), is a further attempt at explaining achievement motivation. Level of activation is described by Fiske and Maddi (1968) as the individual's normal level of excitement, alertness, tension or energy, and, in their analyses of human activity and activation, focus on the consistency between the degree of body tension or activation that is customary for a person, and that which actually exists. If a discrepancy occurs between the customary level of activation and the actual level the person:

engages in impact-modifying behaviour; that is, if the actual level of activation is lower than the accustomed level then he engages in impact-increasing behaviour; when it is higher, he engages in impact-decreasing behaviour (Fiske and Maddi, 1968 as cited in Alderman, 1974, p. 174).

Sport and level of activation are closely related according to Alderman (1974), who states:

The high degree of excitement and tension generated in competitive sport, its meaningfulness in terms of the status, prestige, and recognition that accompany athletic performance, in our modern society, and the variation in one's routine life pattern provided by competitive sport, all contribute in making physical activity and athletics attractive or appropriate means for increasing the impact of stimulation upon a particular individual (Alderman, 1974, p. 177).

### Positive Incentive

Expectancy of the outcome of any human endeavour is an important criterion for determining whether positive incentive will prevail in a social situation. Birch and Veroff (1966) state:

The expected character of the outcome of goal-directed action determines whether or not a particular action will occur; anticipation of positive outcomes enhances the tendency to action . . . (p. 14).

The potential sources of positive incentive are to be discovered in the spectrum of socio-psychological literature. Some of the determinants mentioned include biological drives, sensory deprivation, and drive-reduction theories of activity and motivation. However, Kemper (1968) proposes an additional dimension to motivational analysis in the form of reference-group theory. Kemper (1968) states that ". . . Reference groups are identified as the social mechanisms by which individual achievement is ultimately fostered" (p. 32).

Identification of three types of reference groups which may positively influence the individual in adopting a particular course of action, is also made by Kemper (1968). Firstly, the normative group. This group provides the actor with a guide to action by explicitly setting norms and espousing values. Secondly, comparison groups provide the actor with a frame of reference which serves to facilitate judgments about his own values or direction of action; and, thirdly, the audience group which influences the actor into behaving in accordance with the values of the audience.

In discussing the audience and assessing whether it may play an important role in influencing the course of action an actor may take, Cottrell (1968) feels that a distinction should be made as to whether or not the audience is important, relevant, or referent to the individual.

That is, an individual's actions and behaviour will be more significantly facilitated if the person is directly concerned about how the audience is evaluating him (Cottrell, 1968, p. 81).

Underlying the discussion of referent groups, is the assumption that role models may exist within this conceptual framework. Such role models have the potential to establish positive incentives, especially if the individual views his immediate role models as "significant others."

Identification of the role model as a "significant other" is considered to be the process "accounting for one model more than another" (Secord and Backman, 1964, p. 532). The same authors also provide a number of overlapping principles that attempt to explain identification. Such principles include, secondary reinforcement, vicarious reinforcement, fear of withholding love, fear of punishment, status envy, social power and similarity to the learner.

One important related finding to emerge from the literature is that the acceptance of positive-reinforcing role models by the actor is associated with measures of high self-esteem (Orlick, 1972, 1974).

Feedback and reinforcement are determined by Heckhausen (1967) as being important contributors to positive incentive. Heckhausen (1967) contends that "activation and changes in the experienced expectation gradient are the results of feedback about success or failure" (p. 109). Heckhausen (1967) also states that highly motivated subjects work for a much longer time than subjects with low motivation on a complex task where feedback about the accuracy of performance is conveyed to the subject.

Birch and Veroff (1966), Fitts and Posner (1967), Hall (1971), Orlick (1972), and Alderman (1974) all describe the importance of reinforcement contingencies. These reinforcement contingencies refer to the behaviour of individuals resulting in alteration of their immediate environment. The contingencies are also recognized as being important as much of the incentive which motivates the activities of man comes from feedback. As Alderman (1974) says:

A positive reinforcer strengthens the acquisition of a particular behaviour when it is made contingent on that behaviour (p. 87).

Status congruence is an attempt by Homans (1950) to synthesize his work on reinforcement. Homan's (1950) status congruence postulates that self-confidence developed in one area of activity is a positive reinforcement for other or newly attempted areas of endeavour.

Finally, two unrelated, but nevertheless important, concepts of self-evaluation and motivational patterns, may play a large role in the formation of positive incentives for the individual.



Dunning (1972) emphasizes that the process of self-evaluation may become a positive agent for motivation. It might become the driving force behind the performance.

Motivational patterns which convey positive incentives to the individual are identified by Katz (1964). These patterns are: conformity to legal norms or rule compliance, instrumental system rewards, instrumental individual rewards, intrinsic satisfaction from role performance, the internalization of organizational goals and values, and the involvement in primary group relationships.

#### Negative Incentive

Expectation of failure and goal setting are two interdependent variables, discussed by Heckhausen (1967). When discussing avoidance tendencies, Heckhausen (1967) claims that "The more the approach and avoidance tendencies balance each other out, the greater may be the conflict; the intensity of this conflict depends also on the strength of the two tendencies" (p. 54). Therefore, high goal setting is evidently intended to intensify the individual's efforts in order to overcome the failure-avoidance tendencies and diminish the resultant conflict (Heckhausen, 1967). The same author also states that conflict-prone expectations of failure may lead to less appropriate attempts at solutions and, if the situation permits, to interruptions in solving a task.

Failure expectation is analyzed in greater depth by the studies cited in Heckhausen (1967). For example, Miller's (1944) conflict model determines that as the goal approaches, failure expectation rises more rapidly than success expectation and a point will be



reached, at a given psychic distance before the goal, at which failure expectation becomes stronger than success. With regard to failure, Mehl (1962) contends that adolescents have a tendency to attribute success to one's own ability and failure to chance. Henle (1956) determines that reaching the goal and success too early may be regretted. Heckhausen (1967) also reflects that the situational pressures and curiosity incentive may effect arousal and reduce need-Achievement, especially if the goal setting is too high.

The theory of cognitive dissonance propounded by Festinger (1957) may also partially explain negative incentives and why people eventually turn away from continuing sport. Aronson (1968) analyzes Festinger's (1957) ideas, and describes dissonance in terms of current empirical studies.

Dissonance is a negative drive state which occurs whenever an individual simultaneously holds two cognitions (ideas, beliefs, opinions) which are psychologically inconsistent. . . . Since the occurrence of dissonance is presumed to be aggravating or unpleasant to the individual, reduction is attempted by adding 'consonant' conditions . . . to make them 'fit together' better (Aronson, 1968, p. 360).

Fear of attainment and frustrating experiences are two major factors that may evoke painful incentives and inhibit action (Birch and Veroff, 1966). The curiosity incentive system also explained by Birch and Veroff (1966) is linked to the avoidance of boredom. This mechanism is initiated when individuals become painfully tired of one activity and will shift to another to avoid the pain of fatigue (McClelland, 1961) (Birch and Veroff, 1966). Homans (1950) and Scott (1973) add three more dimensions that may

contribute to the negative incentive system acting upon the individual. They feel that being rejected, isolated, and/or bored because of infrequent rewards, may turn a performer away from the activity being currently pursued.

#### Interference With Status Passage: Role Discontinuity

Expectations about a role and the behaviour of an actor make interaction possible between members of a group. Difficulty in meeting a role expectation is then considered to lead to role strain and/or role conflict (Secord and Backman, 1964). One consequence of a lack of clarity and specificity of role expectations is that consensus is reduced, and inevitably, role strain occurs. Role conflict also creates role strain when two or more positions subject the individual to conflicting expectations (Secord and Backman, 1964).

In addition, Benedict (1938) and Glaser and Strauss (1971) reflect on the transition of roles. Benedict (1938) states that when a transition of roles is attempted, such passages can lead to conflict as new roles require new expectations which may not always be met. Glaser and Strauss (1971) apply the same concept in their discussion of "status passages." Such status passages may be a temporary respite, rather than a general trend. However, transitional status movements have the potential to generate an identity crisis for individuals who do not wish to move. In some cases passagees often see an undesirable reversal of their passage and decide to reverse earlier for different face-saving reasons - they may also decide to quit before involuntary reversal is thrust upon them.

Furthermore, transitional statuses often allow the passagees to plan ahead for the next transition. This temporary respite functions to minimize the shock or depression that otherwise, in some degree, may follow the transition (Glaser and Strauss, 1971).

Glaser and Strauss (1971) also postulate that in shaping a passage, a passagee sometimes may wish to avoid completing his passage because being in passage is far more comfortable or safer than what lies beyond. Finally, Glaser and Strauss (1971) stress that the degree of desirability of a status passage depends both on the degree to which a man is socially integrated into groups and on the social circumstances that provide such desirable passages.

#### Self and Self-Esteem

Self-evaluation and self-esteem are manifest in affiliative behaviour (Festinger, 1954) (Rosenberg, 1965) (Maslow, 1970) (Orlick, 1972) (Scott, 1973) (Alderman, 1974).

Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison in which there is a drive in the human organism to evaluate his opinions, abilities and emotions, provides information called social reality. The unidirectionality of "ability self-evaluation" also proposed by Festinger (1954), indicates an upward drive in individuals to improve or change their lot in life. Thus, it appears that social comparison becomes one key link in the explanation of self-esteem through affiliation in a group. Alderman (1974) discusses this affiliative factor in relation to the sports group:

Needs such as recognition, approval, support, and prestige can only be satisfied through a social type of affiliation . . . . And when this affiliative type of urge starts to function, he (boy) becomes aware that various alternatives are open to him which can satisfy this need for self esteem. One of the alternatives is affiliating with sports groups (p. 257).

Self-esteem needs are twofold according to Maslow's (1970) theory on personality and motivation. Firstly, those involved with needs for achievement, mastery, and competence—which lead to self-confidence, and secondly, those involved with prestige, status, recognition and reputation—which eventuate as feelings of self-worth. The needs for achievement, satisfaction of such needs, and feelings of self-worth are interrelated in the following summary of self-worth advanced by Alderman (1974). Alderman's (1974) analysis concluded that:

The satisfaction of such needs is seen as leading to convincing the person of his adequacy and capability in the world; the thwarting or blocking of them to feelings of inferiority and weakness (p. 256).

Rosenberg, (1965) in the analyses of the self and self-esteem, discovered that individuals who are active in a wide variety of social activities tend to rate high on measures of self-esteem. Those factors which make people with low self-esteem less likely to participate in activity are, firstly, they feel they have nothing to contribute; secondly, they feel threatened by others; and thirdly, they feel self-conscious about performing in front of others. Status discontinuity involves a dramatic shift of self-esteem, and, if a person facing the discontinuity holds a tendency toward low self-esteem, a false front is often presented to overcome a feeling of worthlessness. In a competitive society failure takes an important



psychic and emotional toll. A common coping mechanism in such circumstances is the shift of interest (Rosenberg, 1965).

The person with high self-esteem, does not need to present a false front or shift his interest. This individual is by nature of his self-esteem, strict, competitive, assertive, and is stern but fair. A high self-esteem individual usually takes the initiative in establishing new social contacts, and, participates in extra-curricular activities more than those with low self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965).

Research into sports participation and the self have been elaborately researched by Orlick (1972) and Scott (1973). Orlick (1972) in his study found that children who did not elect to participate in sport had low sports perception. That is, they perceived themselves as being incapable, and/or uneasy in the sport that they finally gave up. A positive or negative effect on the self is a major outcome of participating in sport (Scott, 1973). Scott (1973), feels that "In general, the unsuccessful sporting experience seemed to result in a strong negative effect to other aspects of self" (p. 6). These sub-selves, or self in different role categories are also discussed by Scott (1973) in terms of the transferability of attributes. Scott's (1973) interpretation of the transfer process of attitudes is that the sub-selves may contain elements such as self-confidence, which in turn, may be generated successfully in another area of endeavour or sub-self role.

Self-anxiety is a concept which is directly related to studies on the self, and which in turn, may play a part in determining whether the individual continues in a role or not. Rosenberg (1965)



explained self-anxiety in terms of Sherif's (1936) frame of reference theory. The theory stressed that:

. . . the individual's self attitude is probably the major single anchor point to which new stimuli are related. If a person is unclear, unstable and has misperceptions of himself, then he is deprived of his most valuable frame of reference, and, thus deprivation is almost certainly anxiety producing (Rosenberg, 1965).

#### Summary of Socio-psychological Review of Literature

Commencement, continuance, discontinuance, and problems created by activity or non activity, have been dealt with in a theoretical frame of reference. Each theory and/or concept discussed, inevitably interact with one another. For example, the group provides the opportunity for interpersonal attraction, and can have a positive or negative influence in motivating the actor towards or against participation. Roles, social status and status passage, also become interacting variables.

Motivation is an essential element in determining activity orientations. The availability of activity, the expectancy of success or failure, positive and negative incentives from significant others, the drive for achievement, levels of aspiration, and levels of activation, all partially explain the motivation process within the individual. An interaction of these variables towards a positive outcome will provide the initiative for the individual to commence and continue activity. Conversely, expectancy of failure, negative incentives, low levels of aspiration, low need for achievement, and a low level of activation would seem to produce either non-participation or discontinuing of the activity that had been in progress.

The self, which is ultimately the most central and important variable in socio-psychological theory, is affected by the above variables, in differing degrees, in a social situation.

#### REVIEW OF SPORT SOCIOLOGY LITERATURE AS IT PERTAINS TO PARTICIPATION

##### Games

Games have been consistently categorized by many authors over the last half century in an effort to explain play behaviour. Games are philosophically referred to as an extension of man (Tumin, 1954) (Callois, 1955) (McLuhan, 1964) (Kenyon, 1968) (Progen, 1972).

Games are a popular art, collective social reactions to the main drive or action of any culture. Games, like institutions, are extensions of social man and of the body politic, as technologies are extensions of the animal organism. Both games and technologies are counter-irritants of ways of adjusting to the stress of the specialized actions that occur in any social group. As extensions of the popular response to workaday stress, games become faithful models of a culture (McLuhan, 1964, p. 70).

Tumin (1954) believed that human satisfaction could be categorized into three dimensions; satisfaction from extrinsic rewards received from performance, the very actions that make up the performance, and social interactions. In reality, these "loci of satisfaction" (p. 92) become winning, demonstration of skill, and companionship.

Kenyon's (1968) six sub-domains of games are an in-depth attempt to categorize the reasons for playing. They include physical activity as a social experience, health and fitness, a pursuit of vertigo, aesthetic experience, catharsis, and ascetic experience. Progen (1972) adopts a philosophically-oriented approach in his

categorization of games, while at the same time, utilizing many of the concepts involved in Kenyon's (1968) construct. For Progen (1972), the aesthetic experience becomes the primary motive for engaging in sports. Challenge, stress-risk, freedom-independence, union with self, nature and other man, and contrast with ordinary life become exhilarating stimulants for participation. The aesthetic, almost existential connotation of Progen's (1972) classification is reinforced by Cerutty (1959).

Running at its best is an outpouring, a release of tensions. . . . A hour, two hours of hard training slips away as so many minutes. We become tired, exhaustingly tired, but never unhappy. It is work but it seems only fun (p. 219).

#### Factors Influencing Sport Participation

Current empirical research in Canada has shown that participation in sport is largely dependent on environmental factors. Orlick (1972), and Orlick and Botterill (1975) claim that the three major factors which influence sports participation of young children are: significant sports role models, positive expectancies from participation, and positive reinforcement from sports related activities.

Webb (1969) and Petrie (1972) stress that the economic environment forces school boys to adapt and submit to achievement criteria. To illustrate, Webb (1969) contended that as a child progressed through various school grades he would increasingly provide "higher levels of endorsement" to skill and winning, and lower levels of importance to fairness. Thus, competition and success, risk taking, and exploration of skill become not only reasons for playing and continuing sport, but also prized values.

Environmental factors in relation to the urban-rural dichotomy and school size are specifically discussed by Eitzen (1974). It appears from Eitzen's (1974) research that the strongest support for sport comes from small schools; particularly small rural schools.

Other authors contend that athletes are first influenced towards the sport in which they competed by parents, friends, relatives and local coaches (Cowell, 1960) (Oglick, 1972) (DuWors, 1973) (Eitzen, 1974).

Cowell (1960) and Rehberg (1969) find that encouragement to continue in sport is partly a result of greater "visibility" of the athlete. Because of this visibility, the athlete becomes the recipient of scholastic and career counselling. Thus, the consequences of visibility are themselves positive reinforcers for continuance in sport.

DuWors (1973) surveyed Canadian national athletes and found that for this elite group, enjoyment for competition, and fun for doing sport itself, proved to be the two most important factors in the continuance of sport.

#### The Coach

The role of the coach as a "significant other" has been analyzed by Oglivie and Tutko (1971), Phillips and Schafer (1971) and Synder (1972). Within the competitive environment, athletes indicate a low interest in receiving support and concern from others, and a low need for affiliation. "Such a personality seems



necessary to achieve victory over others" (Ogilvie and Tutko, 1971, p. 62). The same authors also indicate that outside his field the athlete requires emotional support from others if he is to continue.

Phillips and Schafer (1971), and Synder (1972) indicate that the coach appears as an important reference person who transmits values and normative expectations to athletes. Synder's (1972) research showed the high school coach to be an important educational advisor to his players, especially those with a high level of competence involvement. Therefore, it appeared that the coach was more likely to encourage his "star" players to attend college than lower skilled players on his squad. Furthermore, the results showed that:

those players who are given educational assistance by their coaches are more likely to perceive their coach as personally influential, and this coach-player relationship is likely to continue after high-school graduation (Synder, 1972, p. 8).

#### The Athletic Sub-culture and Social Status

The athletic sub-culture and the social status of the athlete within the high-school system has been reviewed by many authors. Cowell (1960) cites many studies which demonstrate that athletic prowess contributes to social status. Coleman (1961), Friesen (1969), Schafer (1971), Phillips and Schafer (1971) and Eitzen (1974) have all indicated the existence of an athletic sub-culture within the high school social system. They also note that male members of this sub-culture are at or near the top of the status structure in the school.



Schafer (1971) contends that school sport socializes to appropriate attitudes, values, norms, and behaviour patterns, and speculates that the sports hero in the system becomes an integral role model for peers to follow.

Coleman (1961) provided data with specific reference to the high school youth culture. He selected various high schools in the mid-west United States, and drew the following conclusions from his analysis.

The athlete in very sense outdistances the scholar . . . Overall, it appears that the athletic stardom stands highest as a symbol of success, as an achievement to channel the energies of the naive freshman, as a means of entry into the leading crowd, as a way to gain popularity with girls, and as the man with most friends (p. 147).

Coleman (1961) is critical of the high level of prestige accorded athletics in the status structure of the educational system. From his analysis, Coleman feels that the school encourages the development of athletic status which in turn is instrumental in creating the opportunity for teenagers to identify with their schools and community. However, he sees this emphasis on athletes as being a deterrent to scholastic achievement.

They strive as a school in games against other schools, and thus develop common goals and common identity. The games and contests that exist are almost all athletic ones. Therefore the heroes of the system, those who have status within it, are the boys who win for the school, and for the community of adolescents. . . . It is natural for this community to reward these boys by giving them status (p. 218).

Within the limitations imposed, Tannenbaum (Coleman, 1961, p. 310) developed an "acceptability rating" to determine the "most desired character" in high schools. The "athlete" was placed above the "studious" non-athlete in every instance. However, the "non-studious"

athlete ranked higher than the studious athlete. This indicates that the trait of "non-studious" would be a reinforced feature of the high school culture, especially the athletic culture. How this feature compares with the hypothesized high rate of university undergraduates amongst the former outstanding high school athletes in Edmonton, may involve some interesting culturally-specific traits.

A further relevant finding in Coleman's (1961) study was the relative lack of emphasis placed on the importance of sport after high school in the lives of the student body in general.

Friesen (1968) conducted a study in Edmonton as a comparative analysis of Coleman's (1961) earlier study in the United States. It appears from Friesen's analysis that:

The commonly accepted position is that adolescent boys value athletics . . . it is not tenable in the light of the evidence. The pattern for 'enduring' values for boys emerged in the order of: academic, athletics, and popularity (p. 50).

It seems that within the Edmonton high school culture, athletic status lacks the same overall importance as it does in mid-western United States high schools.

Eitzen (1974) conducted a follow-up study to Coleman's (1961) work with an interesting discussion on the role of interschool sport during the 1970's as a direct comparison to the predominant features of the high school culture during the late 1950's. Eitzen's (1974) treatment of the fourteen public schools appears limited in its generalization value, (as was Coleman's) but within this limitation, Eitzen stressed the relative reduction of importance of athletics in United States high schools over a fifteen year period.

These data then, indicate that adolescents in the 1970's are somewhat less likely to use athletic stardom as the most important criteria for male social status than were adolescents in the 1950's (p. 6).

Sports enthusiasm was, however, still important in the high schools as was encouragement by parents and peers.

#### Social Mobility, Social Class and Educational Attainment

Social mobility and educational attainment are two important interdependent dimensions of the socialization process at high schools discussed by Biddulph (1954), Cowell (1960), Coleman (1961), Rehberg and Schafer (1966), Schafer and Stehr (1968), Loy (1968), Rehberg (1969), and Phillips and Schafer (1971).

It appears from the above studies that the dimensions of mobility and educational attainment, may interact as both dependent and independent variables. Biddulph (1954) and Rehberg and Schafer (1966) critically analyze Coleman's (1961) empirical interpretations and discover that among athletes, interscholastic athletics support rather than interfere with the prime educational objective of the high school—academic achievement.

The finding that lower status boys particularly benefit academically from participation further suggests that athletics might serve as a channel for upward mobility, since high academic performance opens opportunities for college and higher job levels. (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966, p. 2).

Rehberg and Schafer (1967-68), Schafer and Armer (1968), and Rehberg (1969) indicate that data from their studies have shown a greater proportion of athletes than non-athletes expect to enrol in college after high school.

This relationship is especially marked among boys not otherwise disposed toward college, that is, those from working class homes, those in the lower half of the graduating class and those with low parental encouragement to go to college (Rehberg and Schafer, 1967-68, p. 739).

Webb (1969) states, from his study on the professionalization of sport, that the boy from lower 'occupational levels' is said to have succeeded in sport "inspite of his background". The upper class boy faces constant pressure to achieve as he has to demonstrate athletic superiority independently of the advantages provided by his background.

#### Reasons Why Sport May Serve as a Vehicle for Social Mobility

Research by sport sociologists has indicated that participation in athletics may enhance upward mobility. The reasons for such speculation include firstly; an emphasis on hard work, self improvement and success, which carries over to produce higher self aspirations for future education, and occupational attainments (Friedenberg, 1966) (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966) (Rehberg, 1969).

Secondly, outside of the high school sub-culture, association with and recognition from peers also provides extra incentive to attend college. These incentives may be reinforced constantly if the peers are from the "college-bound" segment and/or part of the established "leading crowd". Thus, differential interaction that may take place between members of middle or upper-classes may enhance mobility (Coleman, 1961) (Lüschen, 1963) (Phillips, 1965) (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966) (Schafer and Stehr, 1968) (Schafer and Armer, 1968) (Rehberg, 1969) (Phillips and Schafer, 1971) (Eitzen, 1974).



Thirdly, Cowell (1960) and Schafer and Armer (1968) suggest that athletes may receive special assistance in academic matters from teachers, peers, and coaches because of Rehberg's (1969) "visibility" factor. Outstanding athletes may also be graded more leniently (Cowell, 1960) (Schafer and Armer, 1968).

Finally, college for some high school athletes may become a possibility because of the athletic scholarships that are available in the United States (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966).

#### Social Class Differentiation With Sport

Studies dealing specifically with the social class characteristics of different sports have been conducted by Lüschen (1963), Loy (1968), Schafer (1969) and DuWors (1973).

Schafer (1969) indicated that white collar boys participate in sport more often than blue collar boys and DuWors' (1973) study of Canadian national calibre athletes indicated that a large percentage of athletes came from the highest educated and highest paid families.

Lüschen's (1963) German study showed that a large percentage of sports participants are from the lower middle-class stata. Lüschen (1963) also found a larger percentage of upwardly mobile athletes amongst the high achievement group than downwardly mobile. Loy (1968) categorized sports according to social status groupings, based on reports of mean occupational scores of fathers of former athletes in twenty collegiate sports. He discovered that status scores of fathers for football are within the upper-lower category, while basketball were ranked in the upper-middle category.



In summary, it seems that participation in sport may create the opportunity to express athletic prowess, which in turn, appears to generate status. Status seems a necessary pre-requisite for social mobility and an important factor in educational attainment. Thus, status and educational attainment together lay the foundation for upward social mobility.

Determining the causal relationships of social mobility for high school athletes has been fraught with the problem of confounding variables. The above authors are therefore careful to emphasize that their findings do not prove participation increases future educational chances, but suggest that involvement in high school sport may enhance status, academic attainment and college attendance.

#### Reasons for Role Discontinuity

Role discontinuity is under-represented in sport sociology literature. However, the major under-takings in this area have been attempted by Ogilvie and Tutko (1966), Mihovilovic (1968), Orlick (1972), Orlick and Botterill (1975), and Syrotuik (1975).

Mihovilovic (1968) conducted a study on forty-four Yugoslavian soccer players aged twenty-five to forty-six, and found the causes of retirement of these athletes to be the result of sports injuries (31.8%), age (27.3%), family reasons (22.7%), bad relations and conditions in the club (6.8%) and elimination by younger ones (6.8%). Mihovilovic (1968) divided the causes for retirement into two principal groups; objective and subjective. The objective causes are those which compelled a player to stop

appearing in public against his will (diseases, injuries, age, family reasons, bad relations and conditions in club, elimination by younger ones). The subjective causes which depend on the will of the player himself are based on the athletes' lack of desire to continue sport practice. In the analysis, Mihovilovic (1968) found that the termination of a sports career for 95.4% of the subjects was brought about by causes independent of the decision of the player. "Only 4.6% of causes were the fruits of the players own will and decision" (p. 77). Unfortunately, Mihovilovic (1968) failed to elaborate any further on the general causes presented above.

The sports environment of young athletic participants, conducted in two major studies by Orlick (1972) and Orlick and Botterill (1975), discovered that some of these athletes gave up sport because of the emphasis on winning at another's expense, and because of the pressurized, unrealistic demands of performance. The avoidance behaviour which was central to the discussion, was found to relate to negative expectancies. Orlick (1972) stated that:

Negative expectancies were evidenced by expressions such as: not being able to make the team, not being any good, being scared, getting in the way, and not liking it (p. 126).

The concept of negative expectancy was also dealt with by Ogilvie and Tutko (1966) and Syrotuik (1975) in their studies on "success phobia." The athletes they studied were considered to possess the required athletic ability, but never quite fulfilled their potential. The fear of success was found to exist because

of the reputation of opponents, inability to withstand the shock of superior performance, and because the athlete is frightened by his own outstanding performance and thereby "cannot accept the responsibility that accompanies success" (Ogilvie and Tutko, 1966, p. 201).

Therefore, fear of failure and fear of success may constitute adequate reasons for the discontinuance of outstanding athletes after high school.

#### Problems of Adjustment

Problems of adjustment after discontinuing sport are prevalent in sports-oriented literature. Schafer (1969) inquires about consequences of failing in sport, particularly the boy who invests a great deal of physical and emotional energy in sports and fails to make the team.

We might speculate that there would be important negative consequences for his self-esteem, his status among peers, his view of the world . . . his future aspirations (Schafer, 1969, p. 35).

What problems exist for the athlete who makes the team, but then discontinues? Beisser (1967) contends, in his case study research, that those who devote much of their time to sport display psychiatric disorders of varying degrees when the continuity of their sport is interrupted. This is because, up until the time of the interruption, sports provided the bond of union which integrated their personalities.

The loss of popularity for many of the Yugoslavian athletes after leaving sport, also created some psychological problems according to Mihovilovic (1968). Feelings of neglect and regret

were the most prevalent of these problems.

Jordan (1975) described the indecision, trauma, and revelations of two former United States champion athletes in re-adjusting to non-athletic life-styles.

Special privileges. My bags were carried, my room arranged, my uniform hung in the locker; a special parking sticker always on my car. Everything was arranged. . . . Now I have to make my own reservations, carry my own bags . . . its a hard reality to face. . . . (Bouton from Jordan, 1975, p. 77).

Both players seemed to stress that athletes should get out into the real world instead of living in a fantasy world. After leaving sport, Bouton reported to Jordan (1975):

I was terrified when I left baseball, a fish out of water. I still won't admit my career's over (Bouton from Jordan, 1975, p. 77).

Underwood (1972) also explains the problems encountered by the former outstanding college football players on graduation in Nebraska. Common problems to all the footballers included let-downs in terms of anticipated football offers that never eventuated, pressure to maintain athletic competence, study time, marriage, and injuries. Many of these former players showed a desire to continue football, as it provided a chance to lead an enjoyable insulated life with their football friends. It appears that trips, privileges in study, recognition and the concomitant attraction value of meeting girls, and social relationships in general, were the most salient features of the Intercollegiate sports system, and therefore those that would be missed the most.

Ralbovsky (1974) takes a retrospective look at the life-style and current athletic (or non-athletic) careers of former



Little League baseball players twenty years after their world championship victory. Most players considered that their short sporting careers were pleasurable, but felt they were being manipulated by their coach for his own self-glory. Many revelled in the recognition and adoration, but others thought the resultant glory and "contrived" festivities after winning, to be meaningless. Some players experienced traumatic events as a result of gaining instant fame and then fading into anonymity. Readjustment to a life-style void of recognition proved difficult for many once their athletic career had ended. The status and notoriety developed in high school, although not as predominant as in professional, college, and highly organized Little League competitions, may still produce such repercussions as loss of identity and social isolation for former outstanding high school athletes in Edmonton.

#### Summary of Sport-Sociology Literature

Games provide the physical and mental boundary in which the individual can participate and achieve. The factors which lead to initial participation and continuance in sport are considered to depend on environmental factors such as; role models, positive expectancies, and positive reinforcement. The economic environment also appears to play a role in socializing the participant towards achievement. Therefore, a heavy emphasis is placed on the sociological determinants of participation. Although this may appear to be a somewhat narrow approach, instinctual and psychological drives have been dealt with in the preceeding review of socio-psychological theory.



The coach is discussed as a significant role model who transmits normative expectations to the athlete, and who is in the position to positively influence the athlete towards educational attainment and sports continuance.

Within the high school social system, the athlete invariably ranks high in social status. Because of this status, the athlete is thought to have inherent advantages over the non-athlete in gaining social mobility and educational attainment after high school. Social mobility itself, appears to be predominant in the lower-class athletic family, and is influenced by such factors as self-aspiration, social interaction with higher status groups, privileges through visibility and the advantages of attaining college scholarships.

Role discontinuity is a recently analyzed sport phenomenon. Reasons for discontinuance depend firstly on the type of competition an individual is involved in. Junior athletes drop-out because of the emphasis on winning, unrealistic demands of performance and fear anxiety. Older athletes may exhibit "success phobia" or discontinue because of injuries, age or family reasons.

Adjustment to a non-sporting environment after a commitment to sport for a major part of the individual's life, may produce varying problems. Such problems include psychic disorders, feeling of neglect, regret, and loss of self-esteem.

In conclusion, it would appear that environmental factors, social status and potential social mobility, are salient factors in determining whether an athlete continues or discontinues his sport after high school. Once this decision has been made,

adjustment to either a continuance in sport or discontinuance as a sport participant, may produce problems for the athlete.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter presents a description of the community and sample size in which the study was carried out; the sampling method; the research instrument; definition of terms; the hypotheses to be tested; test methods and procedures; analyses of the data; and the statistical procedures to be followed.

### THE SAMPLE

The study was conducted in the Edmonton metropolitan area which has a total population of approximately 440,000. From this area, a sample was drawn from 10 Public and 8 Separate schools\* which included 150 students who were selected according to their football or basketball ability. In addition, 7 athletes who were outstanding in football and basketball were also included to bring the total sample size to 157. However, this figure was reduced to 153 when 4 athletes failed to fulfil the stated criterion of playing for at least two years on a senior high school team. The final figure of 153 represents 80% of the total possible number of athletes originally nominated by the schools.

To obtain permission for the research involving high schools, Mr. Kiffiak, Administrative Assistant at the University of Alberta was contacted. Subsequently, approval from Miss Purer, Separate

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\*total representation

School Board, and Mr. Tom Blowers, Edmonton Public School Board, was granted.

With official approval granted, the head of the Physical Education Department and/or coach at each high school was notified by an introductory letter (Appendix A), and also telephoned, in order to nominate the most outstanding football and basketball players at his school over the past 5 years. Many were sent a follow-up letter (Appendix B) before the final sample.

Prior to contacting each athlete, and before the test instrument was completely finalized, a pilot study was initiated. This pilot study involved the trial run-through of the test instrument with six former and present athletes in order to ascertain the readability of the questionnaire, make appropriate revisions, and to verify the effectiveness of the test administration.

Contact was then made with each athlete and interviews were arranged and conducted at the convenience of both interviewer and interviewee over a period of five months. This was achieved by means of a personal or telephone interview, or a mail questionnaire. Findings were treated as anonymous and the results forwarded to the School Boards, schools, and respondents.

#### THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The test instrument is a questionnaire which was derived from previous research and the author's interest in previously unexplored areas of sport sociology. The same questionnaire was used for the mail respondents (Appendix C) as for the personal and



telephone interviews. The instrument featured two main categories: Section A contained 31 items aimed at revealing the sports background of the outstanding athlete during high school. Section B is sub-divided into four separate categories depending upon the status of the athlete after high school in terms of his athletic career. The four categories are:

- (1) Discontinued (discontinued sport immediately after high school)
- (2) Continued (continuing sport after high school)
- (3) Continued, but then Discontinued (played for sometime after high school but then discontinued)
- (4) Discontinued, but Planning to Continue (discontinued immediately after high school, or played for sometime after high school before discontinuing - but, planning to continue)

Each of the above categories differs in the number of items presented, but contain approximately 22 questions per section. Both sections included open and closed-ended questions; the opened-ended questions were utilized for their depth of explanation and because they would not limit or restrict any potential answer.

The time required by each respondent to complete the interview and/or mail questionnaire was estimated to be 30 or 40 minutes.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

Athlete - a person who is trained for competing in physical activities and/or competitive games (Hornby, 1974).

Attitude - certain regularities of an individual's feelings, thoughts, and predispositions to act toward some aspect of his environment (Secord and Backman, 1964, p. 97).

Champion athlete - one who takes first place by reason of his splendid athletic ability (Hornby, 1974).

Competitive sport - For the purpose of this study; a sport formed into a league in which individual teams strive to win each game, culminating in a season's championship. Each team within such a league has been formally organized with an administration, rules, roles and schedules.

Continue/Continuance - to remain playing the same sport in a formally organized competitive league after high school.

Discontinue/Discontinuance - to give up playing the same sport in a formally organized competitive league after high school.

High school - registered senior high school with either the Public or Separate School Board in Edmonton.

Higher Institute of Learning - any post-secondary, educational institute.

Outstanding athlete - deemed to be a significant entity in a team or individual sport by virtue that he stands out from the remainder of the athletes because of his athletic ability — attracting notice; in a position to be easily recognized (note comparison to champion athlete) (Hornby, 1974).

Self-concept - mental image of one's own self; negative or positive reflection of one's attitudes, behaviour, physical, and mental attributes (Secord and Backman, 1964, p. 579).

Social Status - social level of the individual in the Edmonton community, as determined by the Blishen socio-economic ranking of occupations (1967), which in turn is based on the father's education and income levels. "A position - where a person stands - in the group structure" (Wilson, 1971, p. 671).

Society - social way of living; customs etc. of a civilized community; system whereby people lived together in organized communities (Wilson, 1971).

### HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses in the study are presented in their operationalized form, which enables the empirical testing of the expected relationships. All the hypotheses were derived from sport sociology, socio-psychological theory and/or empirical observation. The dependent variable of major concern was whether the athlete is currently continuing or discontinuing his former high school sport after high school. The following presentation, therefore, indicates the background to the formation of each hypothesis, and also indicates the predicted relationship of the independent variables with the dependent variable:

Hypothesis A - During high school, the individual outstanding athlete is motivated to achieve in order to maximize personal gains and minimize losses (Birch and Veroff, 1966). In addition, the outstanding athlete has a desire to achieve challenging tasks which are going to bring him personal satisfaction and self-esteem (Atkinson, 1958) (Heckhausen, 1967) (Maslow, 1970) (McClelland, 1961)

(Rosenberg, 1965). Interschool competition requires highly skilled performance before status is achieved. Once this competency in performance is reached, the outstanding athlete inevitably receives feedback (Heckhausen, 1967, Alderman, 1974) and positive reinforcement (Birch and Veroff, 1966), not only from his own performance but by other people around the school (Second and Backman, 1964) (Orlick, 1972) (Schafer, 1971) (Synder, 1972). This feedback and positive reinforcement drives the athlete to continue in sport for the prestige, recognition and status value (Festinger, 1954) (Maslow, 1970). The prospect of playing in higher levels of competition after high school, particularly professional or University sport, act as a positive incentive on the athlete to continue. This is especially true if the expectancy of success is high (Birch and Veroff, 1966) (Heckhausen, 1967) (Orlick, 1972) (Alderman, 1974). The thought of social mobility may not be a conscious incentive to continue after high school, but the recognition and glory that are attached to athletic status may motivate the lower class athlete to not only perform well academically, but to also continue his sport after high school (Coleman, 1961) (Lüschen, 1963) (Phillips, 1965) (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966) (Schafer and Stehr, 1968) (Schafer and Armer, 1968) (Rehberg, 1969) (Phillips and Schafer, 1971) (Eitzen, 1974). Therefore, it is hypothesized:

The outstanding athletes who, at high school, have a desire to become a champion, are more likely to continue in sport after high school than those athletes who have no desire to become a champion.



Hypothesis B - Outstanding athletes may have experienced a large discrepancy between goal-setting and achievement (Fiske and Maddi, 1968) (Alderman, 1974) which, therefore, produces impact-decreasing behaviour. Fear of attainment (Heckhausen, 1967) and fear of success (Ogilvie and Tutko, 1966) (Syrotuik, 1975) may also create avoidance behaviour. Alternatively the athlete may develop new interests as part of his normal life development (Birch and Veroff, 1966). His achievement motives maybe transferred to other areas—the rewards maybe maximized in another area (Homans, 1961). These reasons proposed above may provide some clue as to why an athlete may discontinue after high school. In addition, the avoidance of boredom (McClelland, 1961) (Birch and Veroff, 1966), reduction of need-Achievement (McClelland, 1961) and the event of transitional roles occurring within the athlete's life (Glaser and Strauss, 1971), as well as the development of entirely new interests (Birch and Veroff, 1966), may reduce interest in the former athlete's high school sport. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

Former outstanding high school athletes who have discontinued their sport after high school will show less interest in their former sport than those still playing.

Hypothesis C - Socio-psychological literature determines that the social class characteristics and style of living are likely to be restrictive to a lower class individual. He is likely to have a lower average level of education attainment (Eckland, 1964), drop out of school earlier, and not be encouraged to achieve to the same extent as an individual from a middle class home (Kerckhoff, 1972).



Middle class individuals are likely to be high achievers who enjoy challenging and new activities. They also tend to postpone gratification more than lower class individuals (Atkinson, 1958) (McClelland, 1961). If an individual from the lower class is to attain upward mobility then education is seen as the most important variable for increased status (Ellis, 1970). Sport is an attractive participatory vehicle for all social classes as it provides the opportunity to attain athletic status. Based on the above evidence, and work by Lüschen (1963) and Schafer (1969), it is predicted that middle class involvement in sport will be high. The sports literature is replete with studies of sport and social class; sport and social mobility. DuWors (1973) found an over-representation of upper class athletes in his study on Canadian national athletes. Schafer's (1969) study showed that white collar boys play in sport more often than blue collar boys.

There is also ample evidence to suggest that the lower class athlete is likely to combine the success in sport at high school with educational attainments after high school, in an endeavour to achieve upward social mobility (Coleman, 1961) (Lüschen, 1963) (Phillips, 1965) (Rehberg and Schafer, 1966) (Schafer and Stehr, 1968) (Schafer, 1969) (Schafer and Armer, 1968) (Rehberg, 1969) (Webb, 1969) (Phillips and Schafer, 1971) (Eitzen, 1974). Finally, Lüschen (1963) and Schafer (1969) describe that athletes who play basketball and football are predominantly located in the lower middle class social rankings.

Socio-psychological literature infers that higher social class characteristics are conducive to high achievement and that lower class athletes drop out of school earlier. This would tend to indicate that middle and upper class athletes may continue in sport more often than lower-class athletes. However, sport literature from the United States provides alternate evidence to suggest that lower-class athletes are likely to attain athletic success in high school, which in turn positively influences their educational aspirations. This increases their mobility. If this is the case then it would be expected that lower class athletes may continue in sport after high school in higher proportions than middle and upper class athletes. Because the study involves the special circumstances surrounding sports involvement, the author expects the literature in this area to be more pertinent than socio-psychological research per se. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

The individual athlete who comes from a low social status family is more likely to continue his sport after high school than an athlete from a high social status family.

Hypothesis D - The most salient pre-condition for continuing sport after high school is that of motivation - a need for achievement. The competency of the athlete (White, 1959) is self-motivating while at high school. He receives encouragement, feedback from outstanding performances, and positive reinforcement as a result of encouragement and feedback (Birch and Veroff, 1966) (Heckhausen, 1967) (Alderman, 1974). Most of Canada's elite athletes attend post-secondary educational institutions to develop their sporting

careers as well as pursuing academic achievement. For many, attendance at Universities becomes an inroad to professional, national and Olympic teams.

While at University, the reference group (Kemper, 1968) and the influence of significant others (Secord and Backman, 1964) (Schafer, 1971) (Synder, 1972) (Orlick, 1972), provide the athlete with positive incentives. Further, the athletes at University are usually connected with a sports social environment that is friendly and stimulating. The facilities for the athletes' sporting endeavours are available and there is also an abundance of expertise on campus, both of which benefit the aspiring athlete. These tangible factors in turn influence the former outstanding high school athlete to set high levels of aspiration (Birch and Veroff, 1966) (Heckhausen, 1967). In addition, most other athletes have the same need for achievement, and aspire to even higher levels of competition after University (Homans, 1950) (Rosen, 1956) (McClelland, 1961). Status is received at University. This status occurs within the athlete's new role (Glaser and Strauss, 1971) and in an environment not unlike school sport. Fans and team spirit intensify self-motivation for success. Therefore, the sports environment at University is generally enjoyable and friendly. Birch and Veroff (1966) have identified the determinants of motivation (as expressed above) as availability, expectancy, incentive and motive. Each variable interacts and determines the level of motivation for the athlete. It is predicted that for the studying athlete, the sports environment at University is highly motivating, but for the athlete

with a job it is not so high. Most athletes fully employed in a job will not play at University, therefore, they will tend to be largely involved in minor leagues. The facilities for those with a job, (and who play in minor leagues) will not be as good, and generally not as accessible to the working athletes when compared to those who are studying. The athletes involved in minor leagues are anticipated not to have the same ambitions to reach national levels of competition as the studying athlete. Many lack this desire because they realize they are athletically incapable. Therefore, the total sports environment for the athlete with a job is not as conducive to high achievement goals as the environment for the studying athlete. Under these conditions, it is hypothesized that:

Those athletes attending Higher Institutes of Learning are more likely to continue their sport after high school than those not attending such institutions.

#### TEST METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The respondents were introduced to the test instrument in one sitting. Prior to the actual interview some general introductory remarks advising anonymity and the purpose of the survey were explained to the respondent. Each individual was then asked to respond to the appropriate questions in Section A and sub-section in Section B. Rephrasing and the explaining of certain questions was attempted by the interviewer only on the request of the respondent, or when there appeared to be a misinterpretation of the question.



## ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

### Computer Analysis

The analysis of data consisted of determining: (1) if a significant relationship existed between a desire to be a champion athlete at high school, scholarly pursuits and self-perceived attitudes toward sport after high school, with continuing or discontinuing in sport after high school; (2) the significance of difference between mean rankings of family social status of athletes who are still competing and those who have discontinued after high school; and finally (3) the relationship between continuing after high school and selected variables of interest.

The statistical analyses were produced by means of an SPSS program - A MARGINALS command described the mean, mode, median and range for all relevant variables. The percentage and frequency breakdown for all the variables was produced by a FASTMARG command, while a CROSSTABS format enabled the stated "research" hypotheses and other relevant variables to be assessed by means of a Chi Square. The SPSS program also provided a ONEWAY command which enabled the statistical treatment of continuous data to be evaluated. Consequently, the standard "t"-test and F-test were utilized to discover any significant differences between the mean responses of direct interest to the study.



### STATISTICAL TREATMENT

In this study there is an extensive use of non-parametric statistical procedures using a Chi Square for independent samples, and parametric procedures involving the F-test when the data is ordinal, interval, and/or ratio level. The standard "t"-test and one-way analysis of variance were utilized as part of the SPSS computer package. The "t"-test measured the expected difference between two means of interest, and the one-way analysis of variance was employed to assess the difference between three independent sample means.

The data concerning family social status is ordinal (Blissenh Socio-Economic Index), and as such was treated as continuous data for the purposes of testing the specific research hypotheses. Discussion of the use of ordinal data as interval or ratio-scaled data has been prominent in recent sociological research. Seigel (1956) suggests that the minimum requirements for the use of F-tests is that the data be interval-scaled. However, this declaration has been challenged by Anderson (1970) who states that the F-test maybe used without misgivings. The author treated the ordinal scaled data as continuous, and utilized the F-test because the ordinal measures of statistical significance that are normally applied (Spearman's rho and Gamma), could not be justified in their analyses of Blissenh's (1967) socio-economic rankings. They could not be used on this ordinal data

as such data require the comparison of rank to be on two measures of interest for the same person.

Orlick (1972) and Smith (1974) both review a number of sources which also refute Seigel's (1956) suggestion that F-tests can be used only with interval-scaled data or better. The empirical research conducted by Feldt and Hsu (1969), Heermann and Braskamp (1970), and Gaito (1970), have indicated that F-tests may be successfully used in research analyses when the stated assumptions for this parametric test are not necessarily met.

Consequently, it was decided to use the F-test for ordinal-scaled data. This type of statistical analysis is justified in three ways: (a) rank-order comparisons cannot be legitimately made on two independently measured variables; (b) parametric statistics, according to empirical studies, can be successfully used on ordinal-scaled data; and (c) the parametric statistic is somewhat more powerful than a non-parametric statistic (Seigel, 1956, pp. 31-33).

The most frequently used statistic in the search for significant differences between the expected frequencies of two independent samples is the non-parametric Chi Square. This statistic is considered most appropriate for use on nominal-scaled data (Seigel, 1956) (Weber and Lamb, 1970) (Babbie, 1973). Seigel (1956) discussed the use of Chi Square and non-parametric statistics and subsequently concluded that the Chi Square procedure is tenable for nominal-scaled data because "no parametric technique applies to such data" (Seigel, 1956, p. 33).

## TESTING RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses were operationalized and treated in this study in the "alternative" form. This procedure is explained by Seigel (1956):

The alternative hypothesis is the operational statement of the experimenter's research hypothesis. The research hypothesis is the prediction derived from the theory under test (p. 7).

Although the hypotheses were treated this way, the standard rationale relative to the probability of committing a Type I and Type II error, and the significance levels, were followed. Therefore, instead of discussing the results in the traditional null-hypotheses form, the significance tests are interpreted according to the directionality of the "alternative" research hypotheses.

The research hypotheses were deduced from previous studies in sport sociology and socio-psychological theory and stated a priori. The significance levels for these hypotheses were reported when they reached the .05, .01 or .001 levels. The .05 level of significance was determined prior to the study as the minimum level for not rejecting a research hypothesis.

### TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN TERMS OF A TOTAL POPULATION

Tests of significance are to be applied with caution to data that represent a total population rather than a sample (Babbie, 1973). The current study reflects an 80% representation of the total number

of former outstanding athletes available in Edmonton, and although not a total population, the statistical inferences may be claimed by some observers to be erroneous. However, Babbie (1973) reports that many researchers feel justified in using a test of significance in such a case as it "indicates the probability that a relationship is a general one over time" (p. 313).

#### TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND EX POST FACTO HYPOTHESIZING

The study has treated the research hypothesis according to standard experimental procedure. That is, stating the hypotheses a priori. In a few instances throughout the result section, serendipitous findings, (forming relationships after the frequency breakdowns were created) were reported because of their relevancy and explanatory-power to the study. Babbie (1973) explains the unsound scientific technique surrounding the reporting of empirical relationships after the fact, but also reports that:

The unfortunate spin-off of this injunction against ex post facto hypothesizing is in its inhibition of good, honest hypothesizing after the fact (p. 295).

The important criterion for Babbie (1973) in his discussion of "scientific proof," the acceptance of hypotheses and all "fruitful avenues available for data analyses," is not necessarily the confirmation of test hypotheses, but the researcher's honest attempt at explaining his findings. Such an explanation is valid as long as it does not mislead the observer.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The analysis of results follows the broad outline of the test instrument in which the athletes' demographic background, overview of high school participation, and post-high school athletic orientations are presented.

The method of analysis employed in the present study involves reporting the responses to each item on a frequency, range, percentage, or mean breakdown, followed by the use of either a Chi square, a "t"-test, or a one-way analysis of variance. Because the test instrument relied strongly on the use of open-ended questions, these specific items required specialized treatment. The method of treatment involved the processing of the first three mutually exclusive responses that were given for each item. As the first response offered by the respondent could not be assumed to be indicative of his actual priorities, each specific response was therefore accorded equal weighting. Thus, the percentage distribution given for each item is not structured according to any priority, but is representative of the total responses. (See Table 7).

A total of 137 former outstanding high school athletes were interviewed for this study.\* Four athletes were subsequently omitted because they had not played at least two years in the senior

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\*includes 8 mail questionnaires.



school team. Of this remaining number, 7 were classified as participating in both football and basketball. These cases were required to be duplicated for ease of analysis in the football/basketball, continued/discontinued, and job/study dichotomies. Therefore, as a result of this duplication of data, a sum total of 160 cases were presented for investigation and analysis. It should be noted that the 7 duplications were coded according to whether the athletes played football or basketball.

#### OVERVIEW OF THE ATHLETES HIGH SCHOOL BACKGROUND

##### Demographic Background

A total of 153 former outstanding high school athletes in Edmonton participated in this study. A distribution of the respondents in terms of the sport they participated in at high school appears in Table 1.

Table 1.  
Distribution of Athletes by Sport

| Sport      | N   | Percentage |
|------------|-----|------------|
| Football   | 90  | 58%        |
| Basketball | 56  | 37%        |
| Both       | 7   | 5%         |
| TOTAL      | 153 | 100%       |

A small proportion of the group were married (19%), and most of the athletes were studying at the time of the interview (64%).

This distribution appears in Table 2. However, (79%) of the

Table 2  
Distribution of Athletes by Study or Job.

| Current Status | N   | Percentage |
|----------------|-----|------------|
| Job            | 56  | 35%        |
| Study          | 103 | 64%        |
| Not Working    | 1   | 1%         |
| TOTAL          | 160 | 100%       |

athletes had, at some stage of their life, attended a post-high school education institution. Of those currently attending a higher institute of learning, nearly half (41%) were taking science-oriented courses (Medicine, Dentistry, Geology, Science, Agriculture, and Forestry), while 14% were involved in Physical Education courses, and 14% in Arts-oriented faculties (Arts, Law and Commerce). Nine percent attended either Grant McEwan, Concordia or Alberta College.

The breakdown by type of school indicated that a large portion of the athletes attended public schools. The overall frequency is reported in Table 3. Within this framework, 51% of the group attended large schools. The allocation of schools into a large, medium and small trichotomy was based on the criteria adopted by the

Table 3  
Distribution of Athletes by School Type

| School Type | N   | Percentage |
|-------------|-----|------------|
| Public      | 124 | 77.5%      |
| Separate    | 36  | 22.5%      |
| TOTAL       | 160 | 100%       |

Public and Separate School Boards in standardizing the inter-school athletic divisions. A school was considered to be small if it had an enrollment of between 300 and 799; and large if above 800. However, for purposes of a more meaningful statistical analysis, the author re-categorized the schools according to Table 4.

Table 4  
Distribution of Athletes by School Size

| School | Criteria   | N   | Percentage |
|--------|------------|-----|------------|
| Large  | 1400 +     | 83  | 52%        |
| Medium | 800 - 1399 | 56  | 35%        |
| Small  | 300 - 799  | 21  | 13%        |
| TOTAL  |            | 160 | 100%       |

The survey also found that 53% of the former outstanding high school athletes were not competing at the time of the interview. The breakdown according to specific categories is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Distribution of the Athletes' Present Athletic Involvement  
in Sport Following High School

| Present Athletic Involvement          | N   | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-----|------------|
| Continued                             | 75  | 47%        |
| Discontinued                          | 43  | 27%        |
| Continued but Discontinued            | 30  | 19%        |
| Discontinued but planning to Continue | 12  | 7%         |
| TOTAL                                 | 160 | 100%       |

The investigation of the continuous data revealed that the average age of the athletes was 20.7, with a range of 17 to 25. The average rank score on the Blishen Socio-Economic Index based on father's education and income was 121 with a range of 1 to 279. In terms of years away from high school, the range spread was 1 to 7 years with an average of 3.3 years while the mode indicated that most of the respondents interviewed were 2 years out of high school.

The analysis of the final team standings revealed that, in the year of graduation, most teams that the athletes played in finished first in their particular division. The average position was fourth. In terms of the number of sports played at high school, the average number was 3 with a range of 1 to 7.

The distribution of athletes into a hierarchy of league ability and prestige, showed that the largest majority of athletes who are still competing are involved in minor team sports. Table 6 summarizes the results. To establish some form of distinction between "University"



Table 6

## Distribution of Athletes by League Hierarchy of Importance

| League        | N   | Percentage |
|---------------|-----|------------|
| Professional  | 2   | 1%         |
| University    | 24  | 15%        |
| Minor         | 49  | 31%        |
| Not Competing | 84  | 52%        |
| No Answer     | 1   | 1%         |
| TOTAL         | 160 | 100%       |

and "minor" leagues, the minor sports leagues were defined to include, Edmonton Huskies and Wildcat Football teams, the Senior Mens' Basketball League, Flag Football League, University and College Intramurals, and the Alberta College Basketball Team.

## HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Reasons for Playing Sport

In the present study, many of the athletes interviewed contended that they started playing sport in general at high school because: They were interested in that particular sport (42%); sport provided an avenue to be with or make new friends (10%); and for the status and recognition value of sport (7%).

The most prominent reasons for the athletes in terms of joining their specific sport at high school focused mainly on the "natural carry-over" from Junior High (44%). The remaining reasons are reported in Table 7.

Table 7

## Stated Reasons for Playing Specific Sport at High School

| Reasons                     | Responses | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Played prior to High School | 102       | 44%        |
| Friends involved            | 43        | 18%        |
| Achieve at Higher Levels    | 23        | 10%        |
| Status - Recognition        | 17        | 7%         |
| TOTAL                       | 185       | 79%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE              | 228       | 100%       |

Characteristics, Evidence and Self-Perceptions of  
Being an Outstanding Athlete

The current athletes determined that in order to be an outstanding athlete, the individual was required to exhibit a high skill level (27%); a desire to achieve (16%) and to be dedicated to the sport in which he was competing (15%).

The current athletes considered themselves to be outstanding in either football or basketball (63%). The reasons proposed by the athletes for this positive self-perception of their own ability were: Athletic ability/better than others (47%); dedication and effort to win (21%); and because of the recognition by others (12%). Of the 37% who claimed they were not outstanding at high school, 52% of this group conveyed the opinion that there were others who were better on the teams, or because they were either physically inadequate, didn't try hard enough, or conditions in the team limited their athletic opportunities.

The athletes overwhelmingly agreed that evidence of their ability was provided by others at high school (87%). This reflected appraisal is represented in Table 8. The 12% who stated that there was no

Table 8  
Agents that Provided Evidence of Athletic Ability

| Agents              | Responses | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| Awards/Scholarships | 56        | 25%        |
| Coaches             | 42        | 18%        |
| Students            | 26        | 11%        |
| TOTAL               | 124       | 54%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE      | 228       | 100%       |

evidence of their athletic ability provided by any agency at high school, determined this position to exist because they were "just doing their job" or, because they were not as good as others on the team.

#### Desire, Enjoyment and Improvement at High School

Table 9 reflects the position of high school athletes in terms of a desire to become a champion athlete. The reasons advanced by those desiring to become a champion were: Desire to be best/play in a higher competition (48%); status and recognition (13%); and to be a professional athlete (12%). Most of the athletes who claimed they had the initial desire to become a champion, reported that this desire was "very strong" (47%). The athletes who felt

Table 9  
Desire to Become a Champion Athlete

| Desire                 | N   | Percentage |
|------------------------|-----|------------|
| Yes                    | 108 | 67.5%      |
| Not Sure               | 13  | 8.1%       |
| Did Not Enter Thoughts | 11  | 6.9%       |
| No                     | 28  | 17.5%      |
| TOTAL                  | 160 | 100%       |

they had no desire to be a champion (18%) came to this conclusion, because they wanted to gain enjoyment and fun, were involved in other sporting interests, and because there was a lack of opportunities for higher sporting achievements in Canada. (The raw scores were too small to indicate a meaningful percentage).

The respondents almost unanimously claimed that they enjoyed their sport while at high school (99%). The reasons offered for enjoyment are: Status-recognition value (14%); team spirit/environment (12%); the specific characteristics of the particular sport (11%), friends and friends made in the sport (9%); and the fun gained from playing (7%).

#### Encouragement and the Coach

The results of the survey revealed that 86% of the outstanding athletes in football and basketball, while at high school, considered they received encouragement. The origin of this encouragement is displayed in Table 10. The athletes who felt they did not receive any encouragement (13%) claimed the reason for this to be the result

Table 10

Origin of Encouragement of High School to Begin  
or Continue in Athletics

| Origin of Encouragement | Responses | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Coach                   | 83        | 38%        |
| Family                  | 39        | 18%        |
| Friends                 | 33        | 15%        |
| Teachers                | 18        | 8%         |
| Players                 | 16        | 7%         |
| TOTAL                   | 189       | 86%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE          | 218       | 100%       |

of strong self-motivation.

The coach also liked the athletes (91%). The athletes perceived this condition to prevail because: The athletes were dedicated (22%); the coach was friendly (20%); mutual respect (14%); and because the coach identified with their athletic ability (13%). Self-interest in his own prestige, and a clash of philosophies were the two prime reasons for the perceived feeling that the coach did not like the athletes (9%).

The part the athletes perceived their coach playing in their high school athletic success, and the reasons for each level, are reported in Table 11.

The athletes were asked if the coach gave them any advice about attending university. The responses indicate, that by and large, the coach "never" gave them any advice (40%). When advice was given, it tended to be on an infrequent basis ("seldom" - 39%).



Table 11

The Part the Coach Played in the Athlete's High School  
Sporting Success and Reasons for Each Level  
as Reported by the Athletes

| Part Played | N   | Percentage | Reasons                                                                                           | Percentage        |
|-------------|-----|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Large       | 88  | 55%        | Encouragement/Motivation<br>Dedication/Knowledge<br>of Coach<br>Coach "easy to get<br>along with" | 52%<br>29%<br>13% |
| Moderate    | 51  | 32%        | Dedication/Knowledge<br>of Coach<br>Encouragement/Motivation<br>Poor Coaching                     | 32%<br>29%<br>16% |
| Small       | 16  | 10%        | Poor Coaching/lacked<br>adequate teaching<br>skills                                               | 59%               |
| None        | 4   | 2%         | Poor Coaching                                                                                     | 50%               |
| No Answer   | 1   | 1%         |                                                                                                   |                   |
| TOTAL       | 160 | 100%       |                                                                                                   |                   |

These conclusions were based on the former high school athlete's interactions with the coach while attending high school, and the results are presented in Table 12. It is also interesting to note

Table 12  
Frequency of University Advice Given by Coach

| Frequency of Advice | N   | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----|------------|
| Often               | 28  | 17%        |
| Seldom              | 62  | 39%        |
| Never               | 4   | 40%        |
| No Answer           | 6   | 4%         |
| TOTAL               | 160 | 100%       |

that when the coach was perceived by the athletes to have played a large influence on University attendance; 81% of the time the advice was both scholarly and academically-oriented.

The overall estimation of influence of the coach on the life of the athlete, particularly after high school, was measured, and produced the following results (Table 13). In addition, the type of influence is also represented.

#### Privileges at High School

Table 14 represents the perceived frequency of privileges and the type of privileges gained at high school by the outstanding athletes.

Table 13

Degree of Influence and Type of Influence of the Coach  
on the Athlete's Life-Style

| Degree of Life Influence | N   | Percentage | Type of Influence                                                        | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Large                    | 35  | 22%        | Self Discipline/<br>success if try<br>hard                               | 38%        |
|                          |     |            | Establish goals/<br>priorities in life                                   | 30%        |
| Some                     | 61  | 38%        | Self Discipline/<br>success if try<br>hard                               | 33%        |
|                          |     |            | Role model                                                               | 19%        |
| Little                   | 36  | 22%        | Self Discipline/<br>success if try<br>hard                               | 23%        |
| None                     | 19  | 12%        | Never Close/life<br>planned out already/<br>intuitive/not<br>significant | 90%        |
| No Answer                | 9   | 6%         |                                                                          |            |
| TOTAL                    | 160 | 100%       |                                                                          |            |

Table 14

Frequency and Type of Privileges Accorded  
Outstanding High School Athletes

| Frequency of Privilege |     | N   | Percentage | Type of Privilege          | Percentage |
|------------------------|-----|-----|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Study                  | Yes | 70  | 44%        | Class time missed          | 44%        |
|                        | No  | 90  | 56%        | Marks                      | 12%        |
| Coaching               | Yes | 69  | 43%        | Easier to make other teams | 27%        |
|                        | No  | 91  | 57%        | More attention             | 22%        |
| Financial              | Yes | 36  | 23%        | Equipment/first aid        | 30%        |
|                        | No  | 124 | 77%        |                            |            |
| Discipline             | Yes | 46  | 29%        | More lenient               | 40%        |
|                        | No  | 114 | 71%        | Missing classes            | 22%        |
| Friends                | Yes | 50  | 31%        | More attention/interest    | 43%        |
|                        | No  | 110 | 69%        | Small favours              | 19%        |
| Other                  |     |     |            | Use of gym                 | 28%        |
|                        |     |     |            | Student recognition        | 25%        |

### Resentment

Resentment by other students at high school was not high according to the outstanding athletes (43%). The source of resentment, when it did occur, fell evenly amongst the non-athletes and fellow team members. The reasons presented for such resentment are based on envy; envy of success and the ensuing status accorded the outstanding athlete.

### Sacrifices

Study, job, social life, romantic life, and family life "were all sacrificed to some extent" by some of the athletes. However, as evidenced in Table 15, the non-sacrifices were considered to be greater than the sacrifices made. The more predominant type of sacrifices made, are also reported in this Table.

### Gains from High School Sport

In retrospect, a significantly high number of former outstanding high school athletes considered that, by virtue of their outstanding ability, they benefited in many ways by playing in the sport of their success at high school (92%). The distribution of benefits is expressed in Table 16. The 8% who considered that no benefits were to be derived from being outstanding in sport at high school, claimed that "just being in sport" was their only justification for playing.



Table 15

Frequency and Type of Sacrifices Made by Respondents  
in Order to Continue in Sport at High School

| Frequency of Sacrifice |       | N   | Percentage | Type of Sacrifice*                                                     |
|------------------------|-------|-----|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Study                  | Large | 27  | 17%        | Large time commitment<br>Home late and/or tired<br>because of training |
|                        | Small | 44  | 28%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 89  | 55%        |                                                                        |
| Job                    | Large | 19  | 12%        | Interference/Conflict<br>with sport                                    |
|                        | Small | 35  | 22%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 106 | 66%        |                                                                        |
| Financial              | Large | 7   | 4%         | Buying equipment                                                       |
|                        | Small | 19  | 12%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 134 | 84%        |                                                                        |
| Romantic               | Large | 8   | 5%         | Not seen as frequently                                                 |
|                        | Small | 16  | 10%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 136 | 85%        |                                                                        |
| Family                 | Large | 11  | 7%         | Late suppers                                                           |
|                        | Small | 26  | 16%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 123 | 77%        |                                                                        |
| Social Life            | Large | 6   | 4%         | Missing parties/outings                                                |
|                        | Small | 19  | 12%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 135 | 84%        |                                                                        |
| Other                  | Large | 5   | 3%         | See less of friends                                                    |
|                        | Small | 24  | 15%        |                                                                        |
|                        | None  | 131 | 82%        |                                                                        |

\*All numbers too small to report meaningful percentages.

Table 16

Reported Gains from Sport at High School Because  
the Athlete was Outstanding

| Gains                                            | Responses | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Self-confidence/self-esteem                      | 69        | 26%        |
| Social Interaction                               | 54        | 21%        |
| Status-recognition                               | 50        | 19%        |
| Opportunities for future Achievement<br>in Sport | 37        | 14%        |
| TOTAL                                            | 210       | 80%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE                                   | 263       | 100%       |

#### Value of Interschool Sport

Almost 84% of those surveyed were asked to give their opinion on the value of interschool sport. From this group, 81% agreed that there was some value in participating, while 4% stated that no value existed. Of the 81% who replied in the affirmative, the benefits to the individual were seen as: Social interaction/making new friends (23%); self-confidence and realization of own potential (18%), competitive aspect of sport (15%); and, non-academic pursuit makes school more interesting (11%).

Those claiming no benefits in participating in interschool sport did so because of the interference to studies.

## OVERVIEW OF POST-HIGH SCHOOL BACKGROUND

### Feelings Toward Sport

Respondents still find great appeal in the sport that they participated in at high school (Table 17). Seventy-six percent, regardless of whether or not they continued in the sport after high school, say they strongly like the sport in which they found success in at high school.

Table 17

Current Feelings of the Athlete Towards  
His High School Sport

| Strength of Feeling | N   | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----|------------|
| Strongly Like       | 122 | 76%        |
| Like                | 34  | 21%        |
| Little Interest     | 2   | 1%         |
| No Interest         | 1   | 1%         |
| Hate                | 1   | 1%         |
| TOTAL               | 160 | 100%       |

### Attitudes and Influence

Fifty-eight percent of the sample claim that they were influenced by others after high school to either continue or give up their sport. The negative (give-up) or positive influence (to

continue) was assessed, and the findings indicate that 45% determined the type of influence after high school to be of a positive nature. That is, they received encouragement towards continuing in sport. The most pervasive, positive influencing agents on the career directions of the athlete were determined to be: Coaches (32%); friends (23%); and professional teams and management (17%). The last response category includes the perceived environment surrounding professional sport; that is, the excitement, the money and the status value. Talent scouts, coaches and administrators of professional clubs were also included within the management section as agents of influence. The agents of negative influence after high school appear to be coaches, friends, and teammates.

The reasons for athletes not being influenced by anyone after high school (41%) are: The athletes were self-motivated (31%), had been conditioned/always liked sport in high school (18%), and because they had never been noticeably influenced in the past (13%).

#### Study Interference to Sport Participation

The athletes who studied after high school state that their studies did not generally interfere with their sports participation (66%). When study commitments did affect sports involvement, it tended to be in the form of a time conflict. For example, studies interfered with practice-time, became too demanding, or fell below the required standard. Therefore, the time and the commitments involved with school work clashed with the individual's athletic pursuits. For those athletes who felt there was no interference to their sporting endeavours, the prominent reason for this awareness was

that they were able to balance their daily schedule in such a way as to avoid time conflicts.

Of those athletes who were currently studying, and who claimed that study interfered with their sport, only 11 or 7% of the entire sample made a conscientious attempt to divide their time between study and sport on a concentrated level. The result being that 6 of the 11 athletes gave up sport, while 3 gave up their studies. Only one claimed he succeeded in sport as well as study.

#### Job Interference to Sport Participation

The athletes who took a full-time or part-time job after high school stated that their jobs adversely affected their sports participation (62%). The major source of interference was seen as a conflict in job and athletic training schedules. This occurred because many athletes worked in the evenings and could not get to practice. Total time commitment to the job also restricted participation. Seventy-one athletes claimed that their job affected their sporting career, but only 16 attempted to successfully combine both job and sport. From this group, 14 said they were successful in such an attempt.

#### Marriage

The athletes who were married (19%), claimed that their marriage made no appreciable difference to their sporting career (47%) because their wives were sports minded. Thirty-three percent felt their marriage hindered their sport because of the time involved, while 20% concluded that marriage assisted their sporting potential because their wives were receptive to sport.



### Success in Sport and its Carry-over Value

There is a clear indication, as evidenced by the 90% who answered "yes," that success in sport has benefited these individuals in their "everyday life." The benefits were seen as: The development of self-confidence (41%); status-recognition (21%); and the intensification of a need for achievement (12%). For those athletes who stressed that there were no benefits, the largest contributing reason was that sport, at high school, was only a passing phase. Therefore, other interests apart from sport currently held attraction for them. A few athletes also elaborated that they had not placed much importance on success in sport at high school to begin with.

### Status Advantages in Sport after High School

The status and recognition that developed at high school aided the competing elite in the advancement of their sporting career after high school (79%). The status advantages were said to be: Recognition (41%); self-confidence (30%); and achievement drive (9%). The 21% who felt that there were no tangible benefits to be gained from the status following their sporting career at high school, were of this opinion because they "had to prove themselves again" in new competitions; and because some had not competed frequently since high school.

## ANALYSIS OF THOSE ATHLETES STILL COMPETING

### Why Athletes Still Compete

The athletes who were still competing in their chosen sport

after high school did so because they enjoyed the specific characteristics of that particular sport (38%). Table 18 presents a more detailed account of the stated reasons.

Table 18  
Distribution of the Reasons Why Some  
Athletes Still Compete.

| Reasons for Competing       | Responses | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Enjoy sport characteristics | 51        | 38%        |
| Win/reach the top           | 29        | 22%        |
| Playing with friends        | 21        | 16%        |
| Fitness                     | 11        | 8%         |
| TOTAL                       | 112       | 84%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE              | 135       | 100%       |

Respondents were also requested to indicate whether they were still playing for the same reasons as when they initially joined their high school team. Of the 47% who were still competing, over half of these athletes indicated that the reasons were still the same. However, 43% were now playing for entirely different reasons. These reasons are: Self-enjoyment/fun (29%); and the opportunity to progress to higher levels of competition (14%).

A slightly different dimension was explored when the athletes were confronted with the question as to whether they were still enjoying their sport as much as they did at high school (Table 19). The reasons for the continued enjoyment include:

Table 19

Distribution of Athletes who Still Enjoy Sport as Much Now  
as They did in High School

| Response        | N   | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----|------------|
| Yes             | 51  | 32%        |
| No              | 23  | 14%        |
| Not Applicable* | 86  | 54%        |
| TOTAL           | 160 | 100%       |

\*includes 2 athletes who did not answer

The specific characteristics of the particular sport (19%); playing in a higher level of competition (17%), more knowledge (14%); and increased personal skill level (9%). The twenty-three athletes of the seventy-six who did not enjoy sport as much as at high school, have suggested the reason for this to be the lack of time for satisfactory involvement.

Level of Competition and Current Performance

Critique

Eighty-one percent of the athletes surveyed felt they were currently playing or had played in a higher standard of competition after high school, than the inter-school sports league at high school. Approximately 50% of this group revealed that they felt athletically inferior on joining their new team, but had all made an attempt to overcome this feeling of inferiority by training harder. Eventually, 75% reduced the inferiority factor, while three athletes "generally overcame," and four were "not sure" or "unsuccessful."

Reflections on performance after high school, in comparison to their past achievements in high school, were also evaluated.

Seventy-five percent claimed that they had improved because of:

A better coach and improved training methods (39%); a higher level of competition (25%); and a strong desire to achieve (14%).

Those athletes that claimed their performances had deteriorated (15%) felt the two main reasons were: Lack of practice time (33%); and because the team lacked dedication (19%). Eleven athletes considered their performance rating had remained static due to a lack of practice.

#### Problems from Continuing

The competing group report that, for many (61%), the continuance in sport had created problems in their lives. It seems that the main problems are: Injury (25%); emotional problems (25%); and social problems (21%). These social and emotional problems are explained more fully in the discussion section. The 39% who stated that they experienced no problems as a result of continuing in sport, offered the following two reasons: Sport is not the main interest in their lives (27%); current participation in other sports (in addition to their major sport) gave them more recognition and satisfaction.

The competing group was also asked if it was more difficult to continue now than a few years ago. The results showed that 55% of these athletes found it more difficult because of: "Other priorities," such as job, study or marriage (28%), newly developed sporting interests (25%), a higher level of competition (17%); and,

the age/fitness factor (12%). The other 45% who claimed that there was no difficulty in continuing, reached this conclusion because the decision to play was of their own volition.

Respondents mentioned that they had made personal sacrifices in order to continue their sport after high school (59%). The major sacrifices seemed to be: The time involved (34%); studies (12%); social life (12%); and jobs (11%). In spite of the obvious sacrifices made, approximately 83% felt that these sacrifices were worth the effort. The remaining 41% who apparently made no sacrifices, had a strong love for their sport (43%), and could balance, or manage their time effectively (39%).

#### ANALYSIS OF THOSE ATHLETES WHO DISCONTINUED

##### Reasons for Discontinuing

The main reasons purported by the athletes for their discontinuing, after high school, are conveyed in Table 20. The contributing factors to the prime reason (as presented in Table 20) show a similar trend. The reasons are: The loss of interest (22%); loss of social life (16%); interest in another sport (14%); lack of fitness/injury (10%); job/study commitments (10%); and lack of ability (10%).



Table 20  
Distribution of the Reasons Why Athletes Have  
Discontinued Their Sports Career

| Reasons for Discontinuing | Responses | Percentages |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Loss of interest          | 21        | 22%         |
| Job Commitments           | 16        | 17%         |
| Not good enough           | 13        | 13%         |
| Anticipated studies/study | 11        | 11%         |
| Time                      | 9         | 9%          |
| TOTAL                     | 70        | 72%         |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE            | 97        | 100%        |

#### Overall Involvement in Sport

The involvement by athletes in existing competitive leagues, other than the sport the athlete attained recognition in at high school, appears relatively low (55%). However, almost all of those not competing in a league say they recreate frequently. Furthermore, the two respondents who said they never participated in sport, feel that the undue emphasis placed on winning at high school, was the most profound influence on their lack of current activity.

#### Lack of Recognition and Problems Associated with Discontinuing

The question was posed to athletes as to the strength of their feelings when losing recognition after leaving high school. The

assumption was made that these athletes actually received recognition at high school, and that after high school, they had lost this previous recognition. With these qualifications implicitly assumed, an overwhelming majority of those who had discontinued their sport after high school, relate that they were not worried by such a reduction in recognition. An analysis is presented in Table 21.

Table 21

Degree of Feelings Once Recognition Has Been Reduced  
After High School Graduation

| Degree of Feelings | Responses | Percentages |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Highly Upset       | 1         | 1%          |
| Upset              | 5         | 3%          |
| Slightly Upset     | 9         | 6%          |
| Not Worried        | 69        | 43%         |
| Not Applicable     | 76        | 47%         |
| TOTAL              | 160       | 100%        |

The single athlete who was "highly upset" reported that he had enjoyed the recognition, while the "upset" and "slightly upset" group both felt that post-high school sport was a big adjustment. Sixty percent of both of these latter groups were sorry they didn't continue.

Those athletes reporting that they were "not worried" by a reduction or loss of recognition, justified this stand by stating that: "Recognition wasn't important (33%); high school sport was a

passing phase (28%); and, because some were receiving recognition in other, more current sporting endeavours (20%).

Discontinuity of sport involvement has generally failed to produce any problems in the life of the athlete (68%). The type of problems existing for the 32% who were upset over leaving sport revolved around a lack of fitness and a feeling of lethargy from being out of shape. Those respondents who considered that no current problems existed mentioned that they had developed interest in other sport (51%), and that sport for them at high school was only a passing phase in their lives (10%).

#### Desire to Play and Future Ambitions

Athletes not presently playing in any competitive league expressed a desire to return to their sport (78%). Most still had ambitions to achieve in either the same or another sport. The main ambitions focused on: Conditioning and being fit (32%) and doing well in some other sporting endeavour (21%). The remaining group (28%) who had no ambitions in sport basically considered that recreation was now their main area of concern. The type of recreational activities mentioned were tennis, "scratch" football and basketball, skiing, badminton, golf, karate, gymnastics, gravel ball and lacrosse.

#### ANALYSIS OF THOSE ATHLETES WHO CONTINUED TEMPORARILY BUT HAD FINALLY DISCONTINUED

#### Reasons for Playing After High School

Sixty-eight percent of the athletes in this sub-section played for over twelve months after high school graduation before

discontinuing; 19% between one and three months; 10% between three and six months; and 3% between seven and twelve months.

The level of competition that these athletes played in prior to their discontinuance was: professional (3%); University (36%); and minor leagues (61%).

The reasons for playing are summarized and presented in Table 22.

Table 22

Distribution of the Reasons Why Athletes Played  
after High School (for the Continued  
but Discontinued Group)

| Reasons for Continuing           | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Progress to higher levels        | 8         | 23%        |
| Enjoyed high school sport per se | 7         | 20%        |
| Friends encouraged               | 4         | 11%        |
| TOTAL                            | 19        | 54%        |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE                   | 35        | 100%       |

The athletes reported that the three main reasons for eventually discontinuing were; a loss of interest (22%), studies (17%), and job commitments (15%). On the whole, these findings show a remarkable similarity to the reasons why the discontinued group gave up their sporting career.

#### Aspirations

The aspirations of the "continued but discontinued" athletes

reveal that 8 or 20% would like to continue in another sport; 7 or 17% would like to remain or gain fitness; and, 6 or 15% desire to re-commence their sport at some future date because of the enjoyment/fun aspect.

#### ANALYSIS OF THOSE ATHLETES WHO DISCONTINUED BUT ARE PLANNING TO CONTINUE

This sub-grouping of athletes represents 7% of the entire sample. Therefore, the frequency and percentage breakdowns should be interpreted in light of the small numbers involved.

##### Reasons for Discontinuing

The predominant reasons for initially discontinuing after high school include job commitments, loss of interest; and because the athlete felt he was not good enough. These three reasons together represent 60% of the responses analysed.

##### Reasons for Planning to Continue

Five athletes (48%) expressed the desire to return to their former sport because they miss the "team" environment, and because they enjoy sport per se. The remaining reasons include a desire to be with friends, desire to achieve at a higher level, and self-satisfaction from achievement. The above reasons represent the total responses given for this item.

Two athletes expect to return to professional sport, one to University level, and nine to minor leagues. Furthermore, the reasons offered for returning to sport, are slightly different compared to the initial reasons why athletes joined the team in



high school (55%). The current reasons for returning include, a desire to achieve at a higher level, and the enjoyment and fun to be gained from sports participation.

#### CONTINUED/DISCONTINUED DICHOTOMY

##### Introduction

The analyses in this section centres on the stated hypotheses and attempts to determine if there are any important differences in regard to other key questions. These hypotheses are mainly concerned with whether or not the athlete has continued or discontinued their sport after high school. The dependent variable in all instances in this section will be the continued/discontinued dichotomy which is cited in the succeeding analysis under the paraphrased computer variable name of "Still Competing."

##### Hypothesis A: Desire to Become a Champion as Related to Continuing in Sport

Hypothesis A: The outstanding athletes who, at high school, have a desire to become a champion, are more likely to continue in sport after high school than those athletes who have no desire to become a champion.

The findings indicate a general trend in the expected direction, but do not support the hypothesis at the significance level of .05 (Table 23). Therefore desirability to become a champion at high school is not significantly related to whether an athlete continues or not.

Table 23

Contingency Table  
Desirability to Become a Champion as  
Related to Continuing in Sport

|         |                        | STILL COMPETING |           |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
|         |                        | Yes             | No        |
| DESIRE: | Yes                    | 58              | 50        |
|         | Not sure               | 6               | 7         |
|         | Did not enter thoughts | 3               | 8         |
|         | No                     | 9               | 19        |
|         |                        | n = 76          | 84% n=160 |

$\chi^2 = 6.12$  df = 3 where p = .10  
ns at .05 level of significance

Hypothesis B: Interest Shown Toward Sport  
as Related to Discontinuing in Sport

Hypothesis B: Former outstanding high school athletes who have discontinued their sport after high school will show less interest in their former sport than those still playing.

For the purpose of this study, "current interest" was operationalized in the test instrument by the item of "current feelings toward sport." After the appropriate statistical treatment was applied, it was found that the expected relationship, (as stated in the above hypothesis) was supported by the data (Table 24) at the .05 level of significance.

Table 24

Contingency Table  
Current Interest Shown Toward Sport as  
Related to Discontinuing in Sport

|                   |               | STILL COMPETING |           |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|
|                   |               | Yes             | No        |
| CURRENT INTEREST: | Strongly like | 65              | 57        |
|                   | Like          | 11              | 23        |
|                   | *Dislike      | 0               | 4         |
|                   |               | n = 76          | 84% n=160 |

$\chi^2 = 6.65$  df = 2 where  $p = .05$   
significant at the .05 level of significance  
\*includes little interest, no interest and hate

Hypothesis C: Family Social Status as  
Related to Continuing in Sport

Hypothesis C: The individual athlete who comes from a low social status family is more likely to continue his sport after high school than an athlete from a high social status family.

The assessment of family social status level was based on the research by Blishen (1967) who ranked occupations according to fathers' income and educational levels. In some instances, the athletes whose father was deceased were ranked according to their father's last occupation. If the deceased father's occupation was not known, the mother's occupation was then processed. This latter procedure applied to only two athletes.

The expected difference between means is not substantiated by the findings. Therefore, the proposition that the athlete who comes from a low social status family is more likely to continue

sport after high school, than an athlete from a high social status family, is rejected (Table 25). To enable a more detailed investigation of family social status and social mobility in sport, a breakdown of those athletes who have Continued and Discontinued (Table 26), are Studying or Working (Table 27), are Continuing/Studying or Discontinuing/Studying (Table 28), and who are Continuing/Working or Discontinuing/Working (Table 29) according to three levels of social status, are provided for analysis. Upper, middle and lower social status categories were derived from the original mean of the Blishen Socio-Economic Index. One half a standard deviation either side of the mean represented the boundary for the middle-class group. This group size represents 34.13% of all the respondents as specified by normal sampling procedures (Weber and Lamb, 1970). The raw scores on the Blishen Index that make up the categories are also reported.

Hypothesis D: Scholarly Pursuits as Related  
to Continuing in Sport

Hypothesis D: Those athletes attending Higher Institutes of Learning are more likely to continue their sport after high school than those not attending such institutions.

The expected relationship was confirmed when the current study revealed scholarly pursuits to be significantly related to continuance in sport after high school ( $p = .01$ ). In terms of hypothesis D; those athletes presently undertaking courses at any post-high school educational institution are more likely to continue with their sport than those who are currently working (Table 30).

Table 25

Analysis of Variance - "t"-test  
Family Social Status by Still Competing

| Father's Occupation    |      |                                                                                  |              |         |         |
|------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|
| Source                 | D.F. | Sum of Squares                                                                   | Mean Squares | F Ratio | F Prob. |
| Between Groups         | 1    | 4065.0000                                                                        | 4065.0000    | *0.250  | 0.435   |
| Within Groups          | 152  | 982403.0000                                                                      | 6463.1758    |         |         |
| TOTAL                  | 153  | 986468.0000                                                                      |              |         |         |
| *Two Tailed Test Group |      | "t"-test ns at .05 level of significance<br>Mean of Blishen Socio-Economic Index |              |         |         |
| (1) Competing          |      | 116.4                                                                            |              |         |         |
| (2) Not Competing      |      | 125.4                                                                            |              |         |         |

Table 26

Frequency Table  
Hierarchy of Family Social Status as  
Related to Still Competing

| Hierarchy   | Range of Categories | Continued Percentage | Discontinued Percentage |
|-------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Upper       | 2 - 41              | 18%                  | 20%                     |
| Middle      | 42 - 162            | 49%                  | 47%                     |
| Lower       | 163 - 297           | 25%                  | 31%                     |
| *Not Scored |                     | 8%                   | 2%                      |
| TOTAL       |                     | 100%                 | 100%                    |

\*indicates those athletes who did not reply, had deceased parents or were unable to be coded.



Table 27

Frequency Table  
Hierarchy of Family Social Status as Related to  
Job/Study Dichotomy

| Hierarchy   | Range of Categories | Study Percentage | Job Percentage |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Upper       | 2 - 41              | 20%              | 2%             |
| Middle      | 42 - 162            | 50%              | 54%            |
| Lower       | 163 - 297           | 24%              | 42%            |
| *Not Scored |                     | 6%               | 2%             |
| TOTAL       |                     | 100%             | 100%           |

\*indicates those athletes who did not reply, had deceased parents or were unable to be coded.

Table 28

Frequency Table  
Hierarchy of Family Social Status as Related to  
Still Competing and Studying

| Hierarchy   | Range of Categories | Continuing and Studying Percentage | Discontinuing and Studying Percentage |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Upper       | 2 - 41              | 26%                                | 30%                                   |
| Middle      | 42 - 162            | 44%                                | 41%                                   |
| Lower       | 163 - 297           | 20%                                | 29%                                   |
| *Not Scored |                     | 10%                                | 0%                                    |
| TOTAL       |                     | 100%                               | 100%                                  |

\*indicates those athletes who did not reply, had deceased parents or were unable to be coded.

Table 29

Frequency Table  
Hierarchy of Family Social Status as Related to  
Still Competing and Working

| Hierarchy   | Range of Categories | Continuing and Working Percentage | Discontinuing and Working Percentage |
|-------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Upper       | 2 - 41              | 0%                                | 2%                                   |
| Middle      | 42 - 162            | 55%                               | 55%                                  |
| Lower       | 163 - 297           | 45%                               | 41%                                  |
| *Not Scored |                     | 0%                                | 2%                                   |
| TOTAL       |                     | 100%                              | 100%                                 |

\*indicates those athletes who did not reply, had deceased parents or were unable to be coded.

Table 30

Contingency Table  
Scholarly Pursuits as Related to  
Continuing in Sport

|                     |       | STILL COMPETING |           |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------|
|                     |       | Yes             | No        |
| CURRENT OCCUPATION: | Study | 39              | 45        |
|                     | *Job  | 18              | 58        |
|                     |       | n = 57          | 103 n=160 |

$\chi^2 = 7.6$  df = 1 where  $p = .006$   
significant at the .01 level of significance  
\*includes one athlete who was not working

### Related Findings

The data concerning the continued/discontinued dichotomy indicated a significant relationship ( $p = .01$ ) between the influencing of the athletes' attitudes after high school and continuing. It seems that those athletes whose attitude was influenced by anyone\* after high school were more likely to continue than those athletes who did not perceive their attitudes to be influenced ( $\chi^2 = 7.7$ ,  $df = 1$  where  $p = .005$ ).

The findings related to the continued/discontinued dichotomy revealed insignificant relationships ( $p = .05$ ) when the variables of final team standing, school size, and sports played were cross-tabulated with Still Competing. Interaction effects were also statistically treated and found to be insignificant ( $p = .05$ ). For example, the interaction of final team standing and current occupation, school size and current occupation, final team standing and life influence of the coach, and final team standing and desire to be champion, with Still Competing as the controlled variable, proved insignificant.

### FOOTBALL/BASKETBALL DICHOTOMY

#### Introduction

The following section involves an analysis of selected relevant variables which are presented according to whether the athlete participated in football or basketball at high school.

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\*regardless of positive or negative influence

#### Related Findings - High School Participation

Basketball players presented slightly different reasons for the desire to become a champion athlete at high school. Whereas the major reason for both football and basketball players is to improve and be the best one can, basketball players stress the love of the specific game more often than football players. Football players by comparison, appear to have a greater desire to be professional athletes.

The empirical data also showed that football players were given significantly more advice ( $p = .05$ ) about attending university than those playing basketball ( $\chi^2 = 5.8$ ,  $df = 2$ , where  $p = .05$ ).

A further difference in opinion between football and basketball players portrayed in the assessment of the gains (benefits) from playing sport at high school. The results are presented in Table 31. As evidenced, the football players perceived the gains to be self-confidence and self-esteem, while the basketball players indicated the advantage to them is that of social interaction.

#### Related Findings - Post-High School Participation

The priorities for life, which are established by the athlete after high school, differ significantly according to the sport played ( $p = .01$ ). These findings are based on the stated preference for job, study or sport, as the most important area of concern after graduation. Football players report that their job or potential job was most important while basketball players consider study or ensuing studies to be of prime importance ( $\chi^2 = 10.7$ ,  $df = 2$  where  $p = .005$ ).

Table 31

Comparison Between Football and Basketball Players as to the Benefits of Playing Sport at High School Because the Athlete was Outstanding

| Rank Order of Gains | Basketball                             | Sport      |                                        |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------|
|                     |                                        | Percentage | Football                               |
| 1                   | Social Interaction                     | 23%        | Self-confidence/self-esteem            |
| 2                   | Status-recognition                     | 21%        | Social Interaction                     |
| 3                   | Potential Avenue to Higher Competition | 20%        | Status-recognition                     |
| 4                   | Self-confidence/self-esteem            | 19%        | Potential Avenue to Higher Competition |
|                     |                                        |            | 13%                                    |



The two most important reasons for the continued enjoyment of sport after high school; also vary depending on the sport played. Basketball players still enjoy their sport because they are playing in a higher level of competition (20%), and for the particular characteristics of the game (20%). In comparison, football players report that enjoyment has continued because they are more knowledgeable (in terms of sport strategy, skill improvement and training regimes) (21%), and because they are playing in a higher level of competition (21%).

Reasons for discontinuing also differ by the sport played. Football players strongly report a loss of interest (27%) as the most salient reason for discontinuing, while basketball players contend that they were not good enough for the team or that the team was already established (24%). Furthermore, the problems created by the discontinuance after high school reveal a difference between sports. Whereas 40% of the football group indicated that they experienced adjustment problems from discontinuing, only 22% of the basketball players perceived existing problems. However, the types of problems exposed by the study did not reveal any major differences for football as compared to basketball.

The time involvement factor, in terms of hours played during the season, proved to be significant when comparing football to basketball. Football players during their season trained and played an average of 12.9 hours a week, while basketball players actually participated for 9.7 hours per week. This finding was significant at the .05 level of significance ( $p = .02$ ).

### Related but Non-Significant Findings

The football/basketball dichotomy was not an important partialling technique in establishing significant differences in the following relationships ( $p = .05$ ). The sport played had no effect on continuing or discontinuing, level of present competition, resentment, or gains from competing in high school. Neither did the dichotomy show any major differing reasons when cross-tabulated with study and/or job interference, success and carry-over value, status advantages, or reasons for continuing in sport. Sacrifices made by the athlete to play sport and loss of recognition after high school also revealed no major differences according to the sport played. The hours of interest, according to the sport played, showed an insignificant difference ( $p = .05$ ). Football players watched, read or listened to their sport an average of 8.1 hours a week during the season, whereas basketball players spent an average of 8.7 hours per week watching, reading or listening to their sport.

### JOB/STUDY DICHOTOMY

#### Introduction

The relevant variables in this section are subjected to analysis on the basis of the current occupation of the athlete. This particular dichotomy involves only those athletes that are still competing, and the results do not involve any of the formally presented stated hypotheses. The variables that were determined to be of interest are based on ex post facto hypothesizing, and are presented because of their potential explanatory power.

Serendipitous Findings - Post-High School  
Participation

The present level of competition is significantly related ( $p = .001$ ) to the current occupation of the athlete. That is, those athletes who are presently working are significantly found to be competing in either minor leagues or not competing at all when compared to those athletes that are currently involved in studies ( $\chi^2 = 14.3$ ,  $df = 2$  where  $p = .008$ ). This latter group is more likely to be found in the University or professional leagues. However, the finding is explanatory because of the high percentage of athletes who are currently studying at the University of Alberta.

Another finding which was expected and subsequently verified, is the relationship between current occupation and current priorities in life. That is, those athletes who are currently working emphasize a job as being their most important area of concern, while those athletes studying at present stress studies as the most important sphere of current concern ( $\chi^2 = 53.5$ ,  $df = 2$  where  $p = .0000$ ).

A substantial difference occurs in the reasons why the athlete still enjoys sport after high school. The athletes who are currently studying determine that they still enjoy their sport, for the specific characteristics of the game (24%), because they are involved in a higher level of competition (16%) and because they are more knowledgeable (12%). In comparison, the athletes who are presently working still enjoy their sport because of the higher level of competition (23%) and because they are more knowledgeable (23%). Thus, for the job-orientated athlete, the specific characteristics of the game fail to become a major influencing factor in why they still enjoy sport after high school.

The reasons for discontinuing sport also differ according to the athletes' present occupation. Those with jobs attribute their discontinuance in their former high school sport to; job commitments (24%) and a loss of interest (20%), while the studying group specify a loss of interest (24%), and that they were not good enough or the competition was already established (20%).

#### Related but Non-Significant Findings

The job/study dichotomy failed to reveal any significant ( $p = .05$ ) relationships with the following variables: self-perception of ability, desire and strength of desire to be a champion, gains from high school sport, and life influence of the coach at high school. The post-high school variables also proved insignificant ( $p = .05$ ) when cross-tabulated with job/study. These variables are: study and/or job sacrifices, feelings toward sport, the influencing of attitudes, effects of marriage, and feelings of inferiority.

Reasons for type of gains from sport at high school, the carry-over value of sporting success, athletic status advantages, and type of problems from discontinuing do not differ when comparing athletes who are studying to those who are presently holding a job.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings presented in the previous chapter are considered in greater detail in this chapter. An attempt to relate these findings to socio-psychological theory and sport sociology research is also undertaken. This is done in an effort to gain a thorough understanding of the results.

#### HIGH SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The high school background of outstanding athletes was examined along the following dimensions: reasons for playing, encouragement by others, self-perception of ability, recognition of ability by others, desire to be a champion, enjoyment of particular sport, role of the coach, privileges gained, sacrifices made, and the value of participating. The relationship between some of these variables and continuance after high school, is also discussed.

Outstanding athletes say they joined their high school team because they played in the particular sport prior to high school. Such information conforms to the notion that Orlick (1972) and Scott (1973) present. That is, athlete's sporting interests are shaped in their formative years. This is evidenced by nearly half of the sample joining their team at high school because they had "played it and were successful prior to high school" Social interaction



and achievement values rated reasonably high as the next most important reasons for joining the particular team. Social interaction was referred to as the enjoyment of playing with friends or making new friends and the team atmosphere surrounding the sport at high school. Achievement values were specified as the desire to advance to higher levels of competition after high school, to perform as well as possible, to improve, and to win. Prior playing and success in competition at junior high was considered by the author to be a tacit camouflaging of the values of status and recognition. If an athlete was successful at junior high, one of the anticipated reasons for joining the high school team would be the recognition value. The concomitant recognition and status potential would not only enhance the desire to continue after junior high, but also enhance the athlete's self-worth. If the author's interpretation is valid then the reasons presented by the former outstanding athletes for participating at high school do not greatly differ from research findings on athletes per se. For example, Tumin (1954) determined that athletes participate to win, to demonstrate their skill, and for companionship. One of Kenyon's (1968) prime reasons for competing is the social experience, as is Alderman's (1974) affiliative dimension. This dimension is described by Alderman as fear of social isolation, need for self-evaluation, and availability of gaining self-esteem through affiliation.

Once an athlete had made up his mind to play in the football or basketball team, the desire to improve and eventually become a champion, was evidenced in 68% of the responses. Many of the

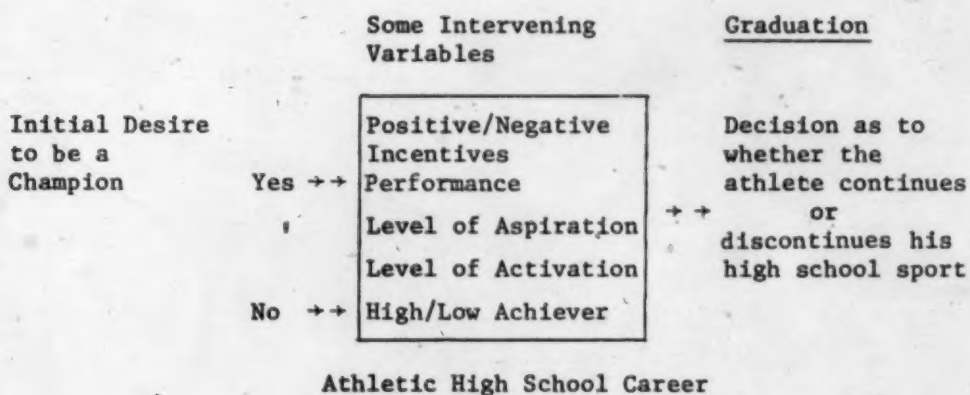
athletes (47%) affirming their desire to be a champion declared that the desire was "very strong." This particular finding presents partial evidence as to a significant number of high achievers amongst the sample. The striving towards a challenging goal is one of the criteria presented by Atkinson (1958) and McClelland (1961) as being representative of a high achiever. The reason for the strong desire to achieve at higher levels of competition after high school is due to the positive incentives associated with playing professional sport, a desire to be best at any activity that is tackled, and the status and recognition value of performing successfully.

The finding regarding popularity is also in harmony with the speculation advanced by Rehberg and Schafer (1967-1968):

Socio-psychological theory suggests that level of aspiration is partly determined by self-esteem and that self-esteem results partly from positive appraisals from significant others. It is likely, then, that the prestige and popularity enjoyed by athletes (especially successful athletes) enhance their self-esteem, which in turn results in higher career goals (p. 739).

The relationship between the desire to become a champion while at high school and continuing after high school was not substantiated (Hypothesis A). In general, this finding reflected the similarity of attitude of both the continuing and discontinuing groups towards achievement. Both groups had the same desires to become a champion. This result also tends to reveal that the mere expression of the desire to become a champion athlete (within a favourable sporting environment) does not have a significant effect on whether the athlete actually attempts to fulfil this desire after high school. The explanation advanced for the rejection of

Hypothesis A is that there were too many intervening variables occurring between the initial desire to become a champion, and when the athlete eventually made up his mind to continue or not, after high school. Birch and Veroff (1966) describe all these potential variables under the general heading of motivation. Positive and/or negative incentives during the high school athletic career may enhance or inhibit performance. Such incentives as playing professional football, receiving awards, and advice and encouragement may enhance the athlete's incentive to continue. Negative incentives such as lack of ability, lack of recognition, and self-perception of the athletes own mediocre ability may inhibit the desire. Level of aspiration, negative and positive feedback derived from performance, and levels of activation may also affect the athlete's final decision at graduation. The diagram below simplistically represents the elements involved in the above explanation of the rejected hypothesis.



If the athlete makes a decision to continue at the end of his high school athletic career, then he still has the opportunity to strive to become a champion athlete in his former high school sport. If he discontinues, the potential for becoming a champion in his former high school sport is virtually non-existent. The only avenue open for this athlete to become a champion, is to take up a new sport or continue one of his other sports he may have been involved in at school or at a club level.

Apparently the reason for most athletes stating a lack of desire to become champion athlete, is because such a decision meant hard work and involved coping with many derogatory aspects surrounding competitive sports. Such aspects include an over-emphasis on winning, authoritarian coaches, and conforming to unrealistic athletic demands. These athletes may have also lacked ability. This explanation is based on the finding that the lack of desire existed with many because the fun and enjoyment gained from sport would have diminished if the pursuit of achievement had been adopted by the athlete.

Eighty-six percent of the former outstanding high school athletes received encouragement while at high school. The major sources of encouragement were identified as the high school coach, family, and friends, in that order. Apparently the influence of the family and peers is not as pervasive for outstanding athletes as is for athletes per se. Synder (1972) found the same results as the current study, in that the high school coach was considered by many athletes as an important role model. In contrast, Cowell (1960),

Rehberg and Schafer (1966), Orlick (1972), DuWors (1973), and Eitzen (1974) all found that parents and peers play the largest and perhaps the most important role in encouraging athletes.

The explanation of the reported difference revolves around the high drive for achievement and the specialist role of the coach in meeting this achievement goal. The coach was perceived as important by the outstanding athletes because of his constant contact in assisting the athlete to improve his game, and because he was perceived as being knowledgeable in terms of sports skills. The coach's role, as a referent person, was further enhanced if he had formerly played the game. Phillips and Schafer (1971), Synder (1972) and Orlick (1972) all attest to the coaches role as a "significant other." It therefore seems that outstanding athletes may receive as much encouragement from parents and peers as from the coach, but, because the coach is a key variable in the athlete's goals for further sporting achievement, the athletes value his encouragement more. Further evidence that the coach is seen as an important figure in the sporting development of the outstanding athlete at high school, is the contention by the athletes (55%), that the coach played a large role in their athletic success.

The advice the coach gave regarding University attendance was considered to be infrequent or non-existent. This finding does not concur with Synder's (1972) research. The results from Synder's work suggest that highly competent athletes are given frequent educational advice about College attendance in the United States. This is done primarily because the coach wants to further



the athlete's sporting career and/or because the coach desires self glory. In Edmonton, 40% of the athletes claimed they never received any advice about attending University. Of the small percentage of athletes who received frequent advice, 81% of these claimed the advice was both sport and academically-oriented. The difference between Synder's (1972) research findings and the current study is thought to exist because of the high degree of importance placed on athletic scholarships and sport in general in the United States in comparison to Canada.

Most athletes saw the coach's influence on their lives as being only "some" or "little." When it was perceived as being "great" (21%), the type of influence was in the form of encouragement and motivation. The most predominant type of influence within this framework was the value of dedication to a task, especially if success is to be attained. Once again this result contrasts with the findings in Synder's (1972) research. Nearly half of the "stars" in Synder's (1972) study reported that the coach had a great deal of influence on their lives and possessed personal qualities that the athletes tried to emulate. The reason for a difference in results is viewed as the apparent importance of United States high school coaches within the education system. These coaches are able to directly and indirectly obtain athletic scholarships, establish "contacts," and then use these contacts and acquired influence to the benefit of the "star" athlete. Therefore, they become highly important reference people because of the extrinsic rewards that they are able to acquire for the athlete. In Edmonton, any influence

on the athlete is seen as being largely due to the specific personality of each coach rather than his ability to get an athlete a position at a particular College or University. Consequently the athletes in Edmonton do not find the coach as much a referent person for influencing their lives as do athletes in the United States.

The former outstanding athletes in the present survey did not, in general, feel that they received an abundance of special privileges because of their athletic ability. However, almost all of the athletes individually reported some privileges as a result of their athletic ability. The outstanding athletes conveyed the opinion that the teachers most interested in sport gave them privileges more frequently than teachers without an avid interest in interschool sport. Such privileges included missing classes, extra gym use, leniency in discipline, and better sports equipment.

Athletic status in the high school system was also anticipated to be reflected in the degree of resentment held by other students toward the outstanding athlete. Forty-three percent of the athletes claimed they received tacit or verbal resentment at some stage of their high school athletic career — mostly from fellow players. The reason for such resentment lies in Rehberg's (1969) "visibility" of the outstanding athlete, especially the perceived privileges and status granted to the athlete throughout the sporting season. Thus, status envy was evident to a certain extent in many schools.

The assessment of athletic status was largely determined on a subjective basis from the questions concerning evidence of

ability, privileges, resentment from others, and gains from being outstanding in high school sport. Although there is evidence to suggest that athletic status does not seem to be as powerful and important in Edmonton as in studies reported throughout the United States (Coleman, 1961) (Eitzen, 1974), athletic status still exists in the Edmonton school system. Friesen (1969) discovered the existence of the importance of athletic performance in a cross-national Canadian study. Unlike Coleman's (1961) evidence, which suggested that the student athlete ranked very high in the school hierarchy, Friesen determined the academic pursuit to be most valued in Canada. This was followed by athletic involvement. Therefore, the author feels that athletic status, while existing in the high schools in Edmonton, does not play nearly as large a part in high school life as it appears to in the United States.

Outstanding athletes in the present study revealed, in general, that they made very few sacrifices in order to play their sport in high school. The basic reasons for this occurrence rests on the fact that firstly, the choice was entirely their own, and secondly, because high school sport was conducted within the physical boundary of the school and training occurred immediately after school. Sport was, therefore, still considered as part of the school day.

Each athlete was asked to ascertain the individual gains to be made as a result of being outstanding at high school. The first three reasons proposed are all intimately related to Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison. This theory contends that

each individual compares himself with others in his environment. If this comparison is favourable to the self, then positive self-worth is established. The three main gains reported in the study are: Self-confidence/self-esteem, social interaction, and status-recognition. When the athlete performs at a competent level over a period of time he receives self-approval and reinforcement from significant others. The consequent self-realization of competency also provides him with positive feedback. Under these circumstances, feedback and reinforcement assist in the development of self-esteem and self-confidence. Such a process has been identified in other studies by Birch and Veroff (1966), Heckhausen (1967), Maslow (1970), Scott (1974), and Alderman (1974).

Social interaction and status-recognition are also intimately related to the process of social comparison. The outstanding athlete performs competently. This competency positively reinforces the athlete's own self-image. This in turn gives him the required self-confidence to keep performing at a high standard. He eventually becomes "visible" to others at the high school. When recognition from others occurs, this provides a further heightening of his own self-worth. Other students begin to take an interest in the outstanding athlete who finds that he begins to interact with others more frequently. He gains increasing self-confidence in handling many social situations. If the consistency of athletic performance persists and he continues to be recognized by other students and teachers, the outstanding athlete is given a high status position within the school. The acquisition of this status

is brought about by a comparison of self-worth with others, by others. He also begins to compare his status to that of others and eventually incorporates the value of status into his own personality.

In conclusion, the three main responses of self-confidence/ self-esteem, social interaction, and status-recognition reflect the development of the athlete's personality in a positive environment at a key developmental stage in the life of the athlete—a time for an identity search. Therefore, self-confidence, social interaction and status, become important means of providing the athlete with an identity amongst his peers and elders—he values these traits.

The outstanding football players place a different emphasis on the gains from being outstanding at high school when compared to basketball players. Football players stress self-confidence and self-esteem as the most important gains from their athletic status, while basketball players indicate social interaction as being the most important gain. The specific environment surrounding each sport may account for this difference.

Football players are involved in a large team in which the specific characteristics of strength and determination are required. They also seem to have a keen sense of competition. Football is Canada's most popular summer sport, and probably equal to hockey in prestige on an overall level. These three factors would appear to combine to give the football player a sense of accomplishment from outstanding performances in a football team—a sense of



personal accomplishment. In turn, this accomplishment in a sport that is given so much publicity and prestige would enhance the football player's own self-confidence. Therefore, this trait is highly valued by outstanding football players.

In comparison, basketball players receive a great deal more individual attention because each member is highly visible in a small team. Further, basketball lacks the same importance in Canadian society as football. Basketball is popular in Edmonton mainly at the high school level and opportunities for advancement are limited. Personal ambitions are therefore likely to be less intense for basketball as for the football player of outstanding ability. Thus, with the individual recognition and lack of potential future opportunities for advancement, the basketball player is likely to perceive interaction with others as being more important than the intrinsic self-confidence. Therefore, basketball players value social interaction as a benefit from being outstanding, more so than self-confidence.

When the outstanding former athletes were asked to describe the value of interschool sport to the individual participant, the main values were determined to be social interaction and the competitive aspect of sport. Underlying the competitive aspect is the value of achievement. This is closely related to Schafer's (1971) study in which he described the role of achievement as being "among the most desirable of all virtues" (p. 7). Social interaction rates high for outstanding athletes and once again validates the work produced by Tumin (1954), Kenyon (1968) and Alderman (1974).

The explanation for the establishment of social interaction being high on the list of values lies in the generalization of values to other people. That is, when asked about the gains from being outstanding, the responses revolved around benefits for the self. When surveyed on what the values are to the individual, (i.e. the generalized other) the responses centered more on the enjoyment surrounding the team environment. In other words, the outstanding athletes generalized to other people when asked to evaluate the benefits of interschool participation. They did this because they personally enjoyed making new friends, and also because it is a more tangible value. Achievement values and self-esteem are nebulous concepts. The athletes may have also been socially conditioned by the espoused values of sport when answering this question.

#### POST HIGH SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The post high school background was examined along the following dimensions: current feelings of the outstanding athletes toward their high school sport, influence of others on athletic career after high school, influence of scholarly and/or occupational pursuit on the sports career, social mobility, influence of marriage, perceived carry-over benefits from high school sport to current lifestyle patterns, and perceived status benefits from high school sport carrying-over to current sporting interests. This section also attempts to explain the specific relationships between desire to be a champion and continuing, social status and continuing, scholarly pursuits and continuing, and the attitudes towards sport after high school and discontinuing.

Very few of the athletes involved in the study were married (19%), but of those that were, nearly half stated that their wives made no appreciable difference to their sporting career. The athletes came to this conclusion because their wives were as sportsminded as they were. The same response was forthcoming from the group who concluded that their wives assisted in their athletic career.

Ninety-seven percent of the entire sample claimed they either still "like" or "strongly like" the sport in which they were considered outstanding at high school. In spite of this finding there is a significant relationship between the athletes' current feelings towards their high school sport and discontinuing (Hypothesis B). The relationship determines that those outstanding athletes who have discontinued their sport after high school are more likely to view this sport with less interest than those athletes still competing. This significant finding may partially be explained by the reduction in recognition and status of the athlete as a result of his lack of participation after high school. Without the positive feedback surrounding performance, and without the positive incentives this feedback creates, the outstanding athletes may have turned to other areas of interest (sporting or non-sporting) to gain self-esteem and prestige. Lack of interest may also be explained by the avoidance of boredom proposed by Birch and Veroff (1966) in which they estimate that the individual shifts his interest to avoid the pain of fatigue. This may hold true, especially for outstanding athletes, as their sport commitments after so many years of high level and competition may have produced strain. Another explanation may simply

lie in the belief that these athletes have considered sport at high school to be a passing phase. A phase in which their immediate goals were reached. This explanation also correlates with the research by Birch and Veroff (1966) on motivation, central interests, and a shifting of these interests when the challenge of achieving is lost.

However, some of these outstanding athletes who have discontinued after high school still showed an avid interest in their former high school sport. The two reasons for the maintenance of this interest are: firstly, the nostalgic good times associated with the sport at high school, and secondly, the athletes' identification with the sport. They understand and appreciate the commitment, ability and strategies employed by other athletes, especially when they are viewing a game.

Outstanding athletes were positively influenced by others to continue their high school sport after graduation. Regardless of whether the influence was perceived as positive or negative, the most important agent of influence proved to be the coach (the former high school coach or the coach of the current or anticipated team after high school). This leader either turned athletes on to sport or turned them away. The personality and philosophy of the coach, or coaching techniques per se, were prominent reasons for maintaining the athletes enthusiasm or destroying his interest in sport. These results concur with the work of Ogilvie and Tutko (1971), Schafer (1971) and Synder (1972), who discuss the coach as being a significant and powerful role model; a leader who transmits values. An interesting feature of the present study finds harmony



with Smith's (1974) research. That is, the most important influencing agents do not rely on mass media for support and influence, but on direct association with the coach and friends of the athlete. The reason for the athlete perceiving the coach as being an important influence (as explained earlier) is because he is the most knowledgeable referent person in terms of athletic skills. Thus, the coach becomes the most important agent in assisting the outstanding athlete to attain his athletic goals.

A majority (64%) of the former outstanding athletes are currently studying at a post-high school educational institution. In addition, 79% of the entire sample has at some stage in their lives, studied after high school. This result provides the basis for an interesting analysis. The speculative explanations are as follows. The finding that a large percentage of athletes from this sample are currently studying at the post high school level may indicate that most outstanding athletes attain high academic standing. This possibility also harmonizes with the research by Biddulph (1954) and Rehberg and Schafer (1966) in which they state that interscholastic athletics support rather than interfere with the objective of academic achievement. Alternatively, outstanding athletes may value academics more than sport. If so, then this finding would correspond to Friesen's (1969) replication of the Coleman (1961) study. Friesen (1969) found that in Canada, academic attainment is valued more than athletic ability in the high school system. These athletes may also be inclined towards studying because Colleges and Universities offer a high level of sporting competition. As Rehberg and Schafer (1967-1968) report:



Some athletes who would otherwise not go to college probably desire to go to primarily continue their athletic careers (p. 40).

Finally, as an extension of Rehberg and Schafer's (1967-1968) interpretation; the outstanding athletes may be using their athletic success and combining it with educational attainment for the purpose of social mobility. This type of process is identified in the literature by Coleman (1961), Phillips (1968), Rehberg and Schafer (1966), Schafer and Armer (1968), Rehberg (1969) and Eitzen (1974). If this explanation is valid, then it is anticipated that a significant proportion of the outstanding athletes who are studying would emanate from the lower classes. Further, and more importantly, those from the lower class family status would be more frequently studying and continuing sport than those not participating and studying. However, the results from Tables 26, 27, 28 and 29\* refute the notion of upward social mobility of the lower classes through sport. These tables reveal that there is a higher percentage of lower class athletes who have discontinued than who have continued (Table 26). The indication that there is a higher proportion of lower class athletes in the group who have a job, as compared to those who are studying, adds further support to the rejection of upward social mobility (Table 27). However, the most interesting and pertinent results appear in Tables 28 and 29. Table 28 finds that there are far more lower class athletes who have discontinued but are studying (29%) than who are currently studying and also continuing their sport (20%). Table 29 indicates a large percentage of lower

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\*The rejection of such a proposition is made within the limitations of the statistical framework utilized in this study.

class athletes in the job group, regardless of continuance. What the results do reveal is that many lower class athletes are involved in jobs, and as such, are unable to take advantage of the potential mobility that studying appears to offer. Therefore, upward social mobility does not appear to be evident in this sample as the lower class athletes do not combine athletic success with academic achievements and fail to continue in significant proportions when compared to those with a job.

The evidence also points to a large percentage of outstanding athletes in the middle class strata. Rosen (1969) and McClelland's (1961) research closely relate to this finding. That is, high achievers are to be typically found in the middle classes. Schafer (1969) also found in his study that white collar boys participate in sport more frequently than blue collar boys.

Further evidence of a lack of social mobility and the insignificant role of family social status on continuance after high school, is reflected in the rejection of Hypothesis C. This rejection means that in Edmonton, family social status has no significant effect on whether an athlete continues or discontinues his sport after high school. The reasons for the similarity of social status, and therefore a lack of social mobility, for both the continuing and discontinuing groups, may be due to the overall equal distribution of wealth throughout the province of Alberta. Possibly, because the lack of financial limitations on attending University are minimal, it enables the lower class athlete equal academic potential (along with concurrent participation in University sport).

Part-time summer jobs may provide substantial financial stability to support the studying lower class athlete during fall and winter semesters. Socialization processes on the lower class individual as reported by Kerchkoff (1972) apparently do not interfere with the outstanding athlete's intention to continue sport - he appears to hold sport as a functional part of his life, as does the athlete from the middle and upper class strata. The reason for a lack of social class distinction between continuing and discontinuing outstanding athletes may also revolve around the special privileges and valued potential opportunities for achievement in sport. These intrinsic and extrinsic rewards may outweigh the lower social class traits of conformity, low achievement motives, and reliance on immediate pay-offs. The lower class athlete probably receives the same encouragement to continue from his coach as the middle and upper class athletes. Scholarships from United States Universities may have also been offered to the lower class athlete. As well the level of competition may have been self-motivating after high school. Therefore, it seems that the special circumstances surrounding the outstanding athlete (for example - recognition, privileges, etc.) may negate some of the disadvantages of coming from a lower social class home. This suggestion does not automatically imply that the outstanding athletes are socially mobile. All it says that by being outstanding, they have as much a chance as other social classes to continue in sport. What is evident, statistically, however, is that social class does not hinder continuance, nor does it appear to aid it in Edmonton.

Those athletes attending Higher Institutes of Learning are more likely to continue their sport after high school than those not attending such institutions (Hypothesis D). The same group found, on the whole, that their studies did not drastically affect their sports participation. The reasons for this outcome are involved with the environment of post-secondary educational institutions being conducive to continuing. The facilities for sport are readily available on campus, travelling is reduced to a minimum, timetables and workloads are scheduled, the calibre of competition is sufficiently high to act as a motivating force, the social life is a positive incentive, and the participation in sporting activities while studying provides a relaxing yet challenging environment aside from the commitments to study. In other words, these athletes were attending an institution not too different from the high school setting. One factor that predominated in the discussions of sport at high school, was the fact that sport training and playing did not involve sacrifices or undue pressure because it was part of the school day. At College or University, the same variables as at high school appear to be operating.

In comparison, athletes holding a job after high school found that their job commitments adversely affected their sport. Jobs affected sport commitments to such an extent that those outstanding athletes who pursued an occupation after high school, were more likely to discontinue their sport than outstanding athletes who were studying ( $p = .01$ ). The reasons advanced for this result are as follows: The athlete with a job is likely to be involved in



physical work which produces physical fatigue—this reduces the desire to play because of the extra physical effort involved in training after the working day. Practices are likely to be some distance from the job, therefore travel is involved. In addition, the team is likely to consist of people the athlete does not frequently or readily associate with (as compared to the studying athlete who has frequent contact with his teammates). It is also evident that those former outstanding athletes who are working are more likely to be playing in minor leagues than their counterparts who are studying. Their involvement in minor leagues also creates disinterest, as it was reported that team training was infrequent, dedication was reduced, and the level of competition was demotivating.

A difficult finding to interpret is that concerning current priorities. Football players report that the most important area of current concern to them is their job, while alternatively, basketball players consider studies or future studies to be of prime importance. These results were analyzed regardless of whether the athlete had continued or discontinued his sport after high school. The interpretation is based on the observation that most of the basketball players surveyed are attending some form of Higher Institute of Learning (80%) whereas football players are more evenly divided amongst study (54%) and job (46%). The above finding verifies the observation that post-high school educational institutions have a middle-class bias. It also lends credence to DuWors' (1973) finding that basketball in Canada is a sport played largely by the middle class.



It is expected that football players are more likely to be currently interested in a job, because many more are currently occupied in jobs than are studying. It is a possibility that many football players who are currently studying may consider their future job (or part-time job) as being important to their future financial security.

A further differential finding is that football players spend significantly ( $p = .05$ ) more hours per week during their season training and playing compared to basketball players. Therefore, the following conclusions can be drawn. If an outstanding athlete attends a post-secondary educational institution he is likely to continue his former high school sport. In comparison, the athlete who works after high school has less chance of continuing because of the special restricting circumstances to athletic performance surrounding job commitments.

Job and study alone are not reasoned to be the only causes for the continuing or discontinuing of the athlete's sport after high school. Although the reasons for discontinuing are verified by the significant difference exposed in the testing of the Hypothesis D, other factors may also be operating. Such factors may involve a desire to be successful outside the study environment, intrinsic enjoyment from the competition, the specific characteristics of sport, and social interaction. Self perception of lack of ability, the perceived view of the lack of athletic competitions available to the athlete, and new interests, (sporting or otherwise), may have contributed to the discontinuance of the outstanding athlete's sport, other than the restricting environment surrounding his job. Also, the lower class family status may facilitate the athlete's need

for a job which in turn unduly influences the athlete to discontinue.

Status congruence, as proposed by Homans (1950), is dramatically evidenced in the frequency of responses for the perceived benefits to the outstanding athletes' lifestyle as a result of the status achieved in high school. Self-confidence (41%) and status-recognition (12%) are considered by the author to be highly related concepts. That is, self-confidence is felt to develop only after recognition and status has been established. The constant reinforcement of recognition provides a self-estimation of status, and eventually produces an appraisal of the athlete's self worth by others. If the self is seen in a positive sense, then self-confidence prevails. It seems strange to the author that many athletes distinguished between self-confidence and status-recognition. It may be that they represent degrees or underlying dimensions of the same concept: that is, status congruence. Status congruence is evidenced by the outstanding athletes' attitude of approaching new non-sporting activities with a confidence to succeed. The leadership implicitly associated with being outstanding also creates self-confidence as it promotes a feeling of importance in the athlete.

The visibility, recognition, status and self-confidence attained from competent performances at high school, increased the athletes' social activities, provided the base for understanding others in a variety of social situations, and established prestige for the athlete amongst adults. These benefits may provide the outstanding athlete with a less traumatic entry into the "adult" world after high school. Such speculation is based on the high

levels of self-confidence the outstanding athlete seems to exhibit.

The outstanding athlete also felt that status and recognition in sport at high school are inherent benefits for the individual in sport after high school. The athletes realized that they did not have to reprove their ability in competitive sport after high school because they could rely on the recognition and prestige they achieved at high school. This meant that they were recruited to new teams after high school with greater ease than the athletes who were not so visible.

Thus, athletes in the study provided ample evidence that sport at high school developed their personalities and helped prepare them for their careers and living patterns after school. Whether this happens for the other participants on the team or is a result of the outstanding athletes being conditioned to answer in this way, is debatable.

The athletes who felt that gains from being outstanding in high school were not transferable to their sporting interests after high school, determined this to be the result of a shift to newer sporting endeavours. This included sporting endeavours in which the reputation gained at high school was not important or not relevant to the new environment. Such was the case for those athletes who moved away from Edmonton after high school. A further reason for athletes not perceiving any benefits from their success in sport at high school, is that they may have been playing for the intrinsic value of sport in which personal goals were of prime importance. Therefore, recognition, status, and self-confidence would not have been important to such an individual.

### ATHLETES STILL COMPETING

The following sub-section is a form of partialling in which specific variables are discussed in terms of whether the athlete is still continuing his former high school sport. Variables of interest discussed in this section include: the reasons for continuing, enjoyment of sport, performance ratings, the problems faced by continuing, and personal sacrifices made by the athletes who are continuing after high school.

The athletes who are still active in their high school sport (48%) are still competing because of a combination of two main reasons. These are the specific characteristics of the sport, and an ambition to win and/or succeed at high levels of competition. The latter reason is evidence of the high achievement criteria as presented by McClelland (1961). The former reason of the specific characteristics of the sport seems to be represented in three of Kenyon's (1968) sub-domains of sport: physical activity as a result of vertigo, as an aesthetic experience, and as an ascetic experience. The athletes feel the aesthetic qualities, the "peak" experiences, the total environment surrounding the particular sport, the body contact, the skill and the strenuous training to be most effective in maintaining their commitment to their former high school sport. They also enjoy the self-satisfaction from winning, satisfaction from knowing they are good, because the

game proves to be a challenge, and because the sport offers advancement for improvement. Playing with friends is also found to be a lesser, but still important, motivating force. The above reasons are observed to be basically the same as those presented for enjoying sport at high school and implicitly correspond to the initial reasons for the athletes joining their team at high school.

Lack of time to participate, to involve themselves in sport more frequently, and to involve themselves with other aspects of their lives apart from sport, have prompted one-third of the 76 athletes who did not enjoy sport as much after high school to respond in this fashion.

Most athletes relate that their athletic performance has improved after high school because of a better coach, improved training methods, the higher level of skill demanded in a higher level of competition, and because of a situation in which extrinsic rewards are higher. These variables all act as positive incentives. It appears that decreased performance by athletes is a result of participating in minor leagues. Lack of team dedication, and team spirit and group cohesiveness, creates a lack of interest which in turn is reflected in performance. This question also points to the value of a good coach in motivating athletes. It was quite obvious that some athletes who did not receive good coaching at high school revelled in their current situation in which the coach was knowledgeable and inspiring.



Problems from continuing in sport, an assessment of the increased difficulty in continuing, and the sacrifices made by the athlete are interrelated concepts which center on the overall problems the outstanding athlete faced by continuing in sport after high school.

The emotional problems mentioned in the present study are representative of the problems identified by Beisser (1967), while injury and social problems are emphasized as in the articles by Underwood (1972) and Jordan (1975). Injury is felt to be the most restricting problem for the continuing athlete. Emotional problems are rated next, and these include such revelations as nervousness before a game, depression when the team loses, loss of talent, dejected feelings when cut, psychological let-downs as a result of the non-attainment of expected goals after high school, and a frustrating position in knowing that the athlete was good enough to make the team, but was not given the opportunity. Social problems are identified as being marital problems, realization that others are enjoying summer holidays, lack of successful social life surrounding sport, and because the sport held too much importance in the life of the individual. The main reason for such problems is the time factor involved in either committing oneself to sport, or approaching new activities which in turn reduce the time that is available for sporting interests.

Fifty-five percent of those still competing found it more difficult to continue in their present competition than they did when playing at high school or immediately after high school. Difficulty in continuing is largely the result of immediate and

important responsibilities faced by the outstanding athlete after graduation. Such responsibilities include study, job, marriage and other sports. Because of these time consuming activities, practice commitments are difficult to fulfil, and fitness is more difficult to maintain. A low level of motivation results. Therefore, sporting interests are interfered with and become increasingly difficult to sustain.

Personal sacrifices were also evident (50%). Once again the time factor emerges as an important cause for the interference of sport. Time to participate in sport, time involved in study requirements, time for social activities, and time involved with jobs, were the stated sacrifices the outstanding athletes felt they made in order to continue in their high school sport. Those who made no sacrifices could balance their time adequately. In spite of these sacrifices identified by the outstanding athletes, a large majority stressed that in the final analysis, these sacrifices were worth the effort. Sport participation, therefore, outweighed any sacrifices.

#### ATHLETES WHO DISCONTINUED

The following sub-section discusses in detail the following variables of interest according to the athlete's decision to discontinue his former high school sport after high school. Such variables include: reasons for discontinuing, problems associated with discontinuing, and a differential discussion on the reasons for athletes' problems according to whether they played football or basketball.

Loss of interest, shifting priorities, job commitments and the self-realization of a lack of ability were the opinions expressed by the athletes as to why they discontinued their sport immediately after high school. A greater in-depth analytical inquiry as to why these above reasons emerge, lies in the relationship to socio-psychological theory. The loss of interest may be the result of Heckhausen's (1967) level of aspiration. The goal setting for this type of athlete may have been too high for his actual capabilities, therefore reducing the incentive to continue. Miller (1944) and Heckhausen (1967) also theorize that a person may anticipate his inability to adequately cope with an oncoming situation. Therefore, the outstanding athlete may expect failure in his sporting endeavours after high school, and give up before such a traumatic loss of self-worth is reached (Rosenberg, 1965). Reaching success too early in high school may dampen the interest of the athlete after high school. This reason is advanced by Henle (1956). Monotonous practice may create frustrating experiences (Birch and Veroff, 1966) and a lack of motivation may be due to the negative incentives operating (Orlick, 1972), especially if the coach or the competitive league is not inspiring or fails to provide anticipatory challenging tasks. Some outstanding athletes claimed that the reason for their loss of interest was the over-emphasis on winning. This harmonizes with the opinion of Orlick and Botterill (1975) who claim that non-empathetic coaches over-emphasize the value of winning.

The lack of fans (audience-group effect), constant travel, and the lack of serious competition were other persistent reasons contributing to the loss of interest. Two important observations are made from the above analyses. That is, outstanding athletes require a great deal of motivation, and their achievement needs are high. External factors may also be impinging upon the lives of the athletes on graduation. That is, a transition of roles, as discussed by Glaser and Strauss (1971), from one familiar role (high school) to new unknown roles (post high school) may lead to thwarted expectations and an identity crisis. One such new role which induces conflict is that of a job. Some outstanding athletes also claimed they were not good enough to continue. This may be explained by a fear of success as identified by Oglivie and Tutko (1966) and Syrotuik (1975) or fear of failure, as previously mentioned.

The results of the survey inquiring into the reasons for the discontinuance of former outstanding high school athletes also exposed differences in the reasons for discontinuing when basketball and football players were compared. Football players claimed a loss of interest, job commitment and a lack of athletic ability to be the prime reasons. In comparison, basketball players identified a lack of athletic ability, job commitments, and loss of interest as their most important reasons for discontinuing. The lack of athletic ability refers to the athlete's self-perception of not being able to make the team because of his inability to meet the athletic standards that are required. The explanation for these differences is perhaps related to the specific characteristics



surrounding each sport. On graduation from high school, the outstanding football player is likely to commence a job. The commitments in this area may reduce interest in his sport. He anticipates playing but the anticipated time commitment involved in training also reduces enthusiasm. For the athlete who continued after high school, the availability of a number of potential football teams in Edmonton is a positive motivating factor: his expectations are relatively high because he assumes a chance of making the team. However, in striving to reach this higher level of competition, the self-esteem of the individual is likely to be negatively affected if he doesn't live up to his own expectations.

For basketball players, the opportunities to play and advance in high level teams in Edmonton are limited to the University level. The outstanding players recognize this factor on leaving high school and compare themselves to those already playing on the University team. If their self-assessment indicates that they are not good enough, they dismiss the idea of furthering their athletic career in basketball. Therefore, the main reason proposed by basketball players for discontinuing appears to be specifically related to the sports environment in Edmonton.

The athletes were asked to describe any problems that may have arisen for them because of their decision to discontinue sport. The responses in general show that problems of an emotional, philosophical or social nature do not exist. Lethargy and lack of physical fitness were the predominant replies to this question. Thus, very few of the problems as reported by Mihoviloric (1968), Underwood



(1972), Jordan (1975), and Ralbovsky (1974) exist for the current athletes. Also, the anticipated loss of identity and social isolation problems identified by Beisser (1967) do not hold true for this sample of former outstanding high school athletes. This outcome can be partially explained by the observation that many former outstanding athletes have continued to gain recognition, status and self-worth by transferring their interests to other sporting areas. It may also be the result of a failure by many former outstanding high school athletes to divulge the true extent of their personal problems. Finally, an alternative reason remains, that is, high school life may have been seen as a passing phase which was anticipated to eventually come to an end. The end for many came immediately after high school graduation.

The loss of recognition was also evaluated in the current study. It was found that the majority of athletes (43%) did not appear to be worried by the lack of recognition when discontinuing their sport after high school. The explanation is considered by the author to revolve around the athlete's failure to either self-consciously identify any problems which actually do exist or failure to admit these problems openly when they are identified. This situation occurs because the athlete is attempting to avoid psychic and emotional trauma to his self-esteem. It may also hold true that recognition was not frequently granted to these athletes at high school, or that they may not have recognized it when it did occur. The athletes who claimed no loss of recognition, may not have been outstanding and/or visible enough to receive recognition in the

first instance. An alternative explanation is that high school sport was merely a further passing phase in which recognition was accepted but not valued. It would therefore appear, in light of the valued self-confidence and status gains reported as being important at high school, the athletes who decide to discontinue do suffer problems from a loss of recognition. However, they are not reported because of potential damage to their ego and self-worth.

ATHLETES WHO CONTINUED TEMPORARILY BUT WHO  
EVENTUALLY DISCONTINUED

The athletes who continued temporarily, but then discontinued after high school, gave similar reasons to the continuing group when stating why they continued. They attempted to continue in sport after high school to achieve success, to improve their performance and thereby enhance self-satisfaction, and for the specific characteristics of the sport. The athletes finally discontinued because of similar reasons to the discontinuing group: loss of interest, study and job commitments. The reason for these athletes continuing for some time after high school, tends to reflect a misperception of the anticipated time involvement with job and studies. The athletes in this group may not have been perceptive enough, when starting their new sporting endeavours after high school, to realize that the situation would eventually become boring, monotonous and non-challenging. It could also be that in spite of the above factors, this particular group were high achievers who endeavoured to overcome the obstacles inherent in jobs and studying, but who eventually submitted.

ATHLETES WHO DISCONTINUED BUT WHO ARE  
PLANNING TO CONTINUE

The reason why some of the athletes in this group discontinued after high school was because of the large time commitment to studies. In addition, a significant proportion of these former outstanding high school athletes indicated a desire to return to minor league competition because they miss the team sport and team spirit they enjoyed in high school.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### SUMMARY

Sport sociology and socio-psychological literature is relatively void of information concerning role discontinuity, especially the role discontinuity of individuals who had formerly held high status positions within a specific social sub-culture. The present study was therefore an exploratory attempt to reveal the role of the former outstanding high school athlete, the development of status in high school, and role discontinuity which was applicable to a certain number of these outstanding athletes upon graduation. Therefore, the following major areas were analyzed: the reasons for the athlete's initial entry into sport at high school; the development of self-perception of the athlete's athletic ability, and his status within the high school; the values to the athlete of competing in interschool sport; the desire to become a champion, family social status, self-perception, encouragement, influence of the coach and self assessed benefits from athletic success at high school, with continuance after high school. The study also analyzed the important variables of scholarly/occupational pursuits, and influence of others on the continuance of the athlete after high school. Finally, the relationship between the expressed current feelings toward the athlete's former high school sport and discontinuing after high school was reviewed.

A number of hypotheses were also tested in this study in an attempt to answer specific research questions. These hypotheses dealt primarily with predicting the relationship between various social factors (desirability to become a champion, influence of study, family social status, and attitudes toward sport) and continuing or discontinuing after high school. The major findings in this regard are summarized here:

1. The reasons for playing the sports of football and basketball at high school are primarily related to the athletes' participation and success at Junior High, and/or because he was influenced by his friends. Therefore, their sporting interests appear to be well established before attending senior high.

2. The current assessment by the former outstanding high school athletes revealed that 63% of the sample retrospectively considered themselves to be "outstanding" at high school.

3. Athletic status was indirectly measured by the privileges gained at high school, the resentment of others towards the athletes' success, the assessed benefits from being outstanding, and the carry-over value from athletic status at high school to sporting endeavours after high school. From the analyses and personal discussion with the athletes, it was generally felt by the author that athletic status did exist throughout the high schools in Edmonton. Some high schools placed greater importance on athletic status than others.

4. Over two-thirds of the entire sample claimed that there is value to be gained for the individual athlete in competing in inter-



school sport. The values are social interaction, experiencing competitive sport, and self-confidence.

5. The outstanding athlete generally exhibited a strong desire (47%) to be a champion athlete while he was attending high school. This outcome partially indicates that these athletes are typical of any group of high achievers. The desire to become a champion athlete (Hypothesis A) has no bearing on whether an athlete continues or discontinues his sport after high school.

6. The high school coach was an important referent person as he played a considerable role in the athletic success of the outstanding athlete at high school. By and large, the coach was considered to have played only a small part in giving advice to attend University and in his influence on the lifestyle of the outstanding athlete.

7. Most of the outstanding athletes reported that they received benefits because of their athletic status at high school. These were self-confidence and self-esteem, acquisition of status, and increased social interaction. Thus, evidence of a boost to the athlete's self-worth.

8. Ninety-nine percent of the outstanding athletes enjoyed high school because of the recognition and status acquisition, the specific characteristics of the sport, team spirit and the total team environment, and because it gave them a broader scope for social interaction.

9. The reasons proposed for the outstanding athletes' continuing sport after high school are concerned primarily with the enjoyment

of the specific characteristics of the game. In comparison, the proposed reasons for discontinuing are reflected in the loss of interest explained earlier.

10. The acceptance of Hypothesis B revealed that the former outstanding athletes who have discontinued their sport after high school, will show less interest in their former sport than those still playing.

11. The athlete who has discontinued his former high school sport after high school, apparently has very few emotional or personal problems as a result of his decision to discontinue. The responses to the perceived difficulties due to a lack of recognition after high school, are also small enough in number to warrant the verification of the above results. The only disconcerting problem for the athletes who had discontinued was found to be a reduction in fitness level.

12. Rejection of Hypothesis C revealed that for this sample of outstanding athletes, family social status had no effect on whether that athlete continued or discontinued his former high school sport after high school. The results also indicate that social mobility, if accessible through sport, is not readily utilized by the lower class athletes in Edmonton.

13. The athletes attending any post-secondary school educational institution are more likely to continue in sport after high school than an athlete who takes up a job (Hypothesis D). Study commitments, therefore, appear to enhance the continuance of sport for the former outstanding high school athletes; while working

after high school seems, by nature of the time factor involved in work, to limit the participation.

#### CONCLUSION

This study which involves the investigation of the outstanding high school athlete and his sporting career, has lead to the confirmation of inter-related dimensions that are accentuated in sport sociology and socio-psychological literature. Firstly, man is a social animal, and secondly, he interacts within a group which in turn is based on common interests, beliefs and values.

High schools abound with different groups, one such group consisting of athletic participants. Each school also reflects a hierarchy of groups which is determined by the predominance and importance of that group within that environment. Standing within the athletic group, and above most other athletes, is the outstanding performer. He has been given this higher status because of his competency in athletics. Further differentiation within the athletic group occurs as a result of the type of sport played. Within the Edmonton community, football and basketball are considered not only to be the most important interschool teams, but the most popular. Therefore, the outstanding athletes in each of these teams are considered to hold the most important status positions throughout the entire athletic group, and probably throughout the whole school.

Confirmation of the existence of this status within the high school system is supported by reflected appraisal. This reflected appraisal of the athlete's athletic ability is in the form

of athletic trophies, awards and acclamation by his coach. Privileges from sports-minded teachers and interest directed towards him by his peers also give the outstanding athlete a feeling of importance. In addition, resentment by other students, (non-participants and fellow team mates) as directed toward the outstanding athlete, further strengthens the self-conviction within each individual that they do hold a high status position at the school. Subjective assessment also leads the author to the conclusion that athletic status differs in frequency and intensity at each high school.

Outstanding high school athletes apparently need the athletic group, the athletic environment, and the total school environment, not only to endorse their status, but in order to function as a being. This athlete is a social animal. He places great importance at high school on social interaction and social competency. That is, he values being with friends, making new friends, being capable of coping with a variety of different social situations, team spirit, understanding others, and the benefits that result from social recognition.

The high school becomes an important developmental vehicle for the outstanding athlete. In Edmonton high schools, this elite athlete is driven toward the football or basketball team because of prior playing and success in junior high, as well as the motivating factors of continued recognition and playing on a competitive team. The majority of outstanding athletes have a strong desire to become



a champion and rely heavily on the coach to enhance this drive. Encouragement is not only given by the coach, but also by the family and the athlete's friends. In general, the outstanding athlete perceives his high school sport to be highly enjoyable; he benefits athletically from the status and recognition accrued from his performances, gains a feeling of social competency from interaction amongst other high school teams, and establishes a feeling of self-confidence because of his performance in high school.

Harsh realities of life are faced after high school as the insular "hedonistic" environment of high school days gives way to new responsibilities - basically self-survival. Graduation is a time for decisions; academic, vocational and sporting preferences require analyzing. It is found that most of the former outstanding athletes in Edmonton turn to studying immediately after high school. At the same time, a slight majority of these athletes eventually discontinue playing their former high school sport. Sport, therefore, is thrust out of the limelight and into the background after high school. This finding lends credence to the observation that, in Edmonton, high school sporting life is a passing phase. Sport at high school is enjoyed, reaches a peak of intensity and declines rapidly in importance for many athletes after high school. Many athletes perceive high school as a passing phase and consequently do not generally place importance on the loss of recognition that may occur with the discontinuance of their sport after high school. It also follows that if athletic status was deemed to be highly important at high school, and if the athlete did not continue to play after



high school, then the status loss under these circumstances would be traumatic for the athlete. However, the study revealed that as a group, the former outstanding high school athletes did not face any major problems as a result of their discontinuing sport. Therefore, three main findings emerge. Firstly, in Edmonton high schools, sport is highly important for the outstanding athlete. Secondly, athletic status is important but not over-emphasized. Thirdly, a combination of the first two findings has the following effect: A majority of outstanding high school athletes realize that high school sport is only a passing phase in their lives, therefore their emotional attachment to sport is limited. Because of this, the athletes do not appear to suffer any problems as a result of discontinuing sport after high school.

A decision as to whether the outstanding high school athlete continues his sporting career, (in the same sport he was prominent in at high school) or discontinues immediately after high school, is apparently determined by the athlete's anticipation as to future job and study commitments; his athletic ability as compared to others; his taste for success; the specific characteristics of the particular sport (including the competitive aspect); and the maintenance of interest in that particular sport. It is apparent that the family social status of the athlete and his initial expectancy of future success, while at high school, have no bearing on whether the athlete continues or discontinues his former high school sport after high school.

The pursuit of scholarly and/or occupational goals after high school have a devastating affect on whether an athlete continues his former high school sport. Job commitments restrict participation, while studying assists in the continuance of sporting interest. It is not necessarily the study per se that contributes to the athlete's continuing; the reason for such a state of affairs is determined, by the author, to be a result of the environment surrounding the educational institution. This environment is conducive to sporting interests. Within the framework established by Birch and Veroff (1966), the sports environment at Educational Institutions in Edmonton is motivating because: sports facilities are readily available; the anticipation of receiving recognition and status creates positive incentive; the high level of ability within a high level of competition creates an expectancy of success; and the motive to achieve is strengthened by a combination of availability, incentive, and expectancy, especially when immediate feedback of success is positively reinforced. The major limiting factor for the former outstanding high school athlete who decides not to continue in sport is the total time involved in his job.

When the athlete decides to discontinue his former high school sport, a loss of interest eventuates. The outstanding athlete still identifies with his former sport, but because of other interests (job, study, marriage) and new sports commitments (hockey, basketball, racquetball), he does not hold the same degree of interest as the athlete who continues.

The specific effect of being an outstanding athlete is now considered. Within the high school system in Edmonton, the outstanding high school athlete maintains a high social position, is probably encouraged more at high school than the other participating athletes, and is assumed to have received more attention from the coach because of his athletic ability. The outstanding athlete also receives privileges at high school because of his athletic status, but not significantly above the remainder of the athletes on the high school team. Being outstanding is reflected in a positive self-concept and high achievement values. These same outstanding athletes probably enjoyed sport at high school more than other members on the team because of the status and recognition associated with their names. In fact the advantages of status and recognition had the potential to increase self-worth. It is also estimated that the outstanding athletes had no greater sacrifices to make in order to play their sport than did athletes of average ability.

The outstanding athlete had status at high school. If he discontinued, a reduction in status and frequent feedback surrounding this status, failed to create any psychological repercussions. If this finding reflects the true state of affairs, then the outstanding athlete faces no greater problems from discontinuance than any other high school athlete in Edmonton. Outstanding athletes have high expectations of success, and if this is not met, then a loss of interest may result. Such a finding is confirmed in the athletes' responses as to why they discontinued sport.

The outstanding athletes who had a job may have also had added pressure placed on their performance because of their status.

Job commitments seem to limit performance and, if the athlete has to train hard to reach the high levels of performance expected by the coach and himself, the striving to continue may create a conflict in commitments which may eventually contribute to his decision to discontinue. The fact that the outstanding athlete is identified by others as outstanding gives the individual athlete immense satisfaction from participating after high school. In comparison to other participants, the outstanding athlete has the overall advantage of recognition and prestige which contributes to his own self-worth.

In summary, the high school is a separate culture in which interschool sport provides the basis for an individual athlete to achieve. A basis upon which to attain high levels of competency; a competency which in turn provides status for the individual, and a corresponding boost to his self-worth. In Edmonton, many outstanding former high school athletes continue their high school sport for a chance to gain prestige, self-satisfaction, and because of the social experiences. Many reject their former high school sport because they lose interest. It is suspected that this rejection may really be a self rationalization for fear of the consequences of failure. Job commitments restrict athletic participation, while the environment surrounding studies assists in the development of the athletes' sporting career. Further, investigation of family social status and expectation of success while the athlete is at high school, shows that they are not significant determinants for continuing after high school. Finally, problems from a lack of participation after high school are seen as negligible.



## IMPLICATIONS

The study attempted to analyze the role of sport in the life of the outstanding athlete during his high school years, and to concentrate specifically on the consequences of role discontinuity after high school. The sample was drawn from all the senior high schools within the metropolitan area of Edmonton, and as such, the results are limited in their generalization to the entire Canadian population of outstanding athletes.

The results of the study may indicate some of the important sources of influence on the life of the high school athlete, especially the outstanding athlete. It may also yield a greater insight into the aspirations and attitudes exhibited by the athletes, and the ensuing problems these elite athletes encountered, both during and after high school.

The results of the present study suggest a number of implications for physical educators, sport sociologists and sport administrators at all levels of competitive sport.

1. One major reason which contributes to the decision of the outstanding athlete to give up sport, is the part played by the athletes' job. Those former outstanding high school athletes who pursue an occupation after high school are more likely to give up their high school sport than those currently studying. At a time when Canadian national athletes are reporting difficulties in continuing their training because of financial insecurity, and the



difficulty in getting time off from their employers, this finding has great significance. It points to a re-investigation of the athletic worth to the country of all highly skilled athletes, and a related study on time and financial allowances as incentives for these athletes to continue. It may also find merit in suggesting that athletes be given more consideration from their employers to participate in sport.

2. The study confirms that 53% of the sample give up sport within two years of high school graduation. It also found that 78% of those who had decided not to continue had the desire to play the same sport again if the opportunities prevailed. These results indicate that a community development of sports clubs based on team and individual sports should be considered in Edmonton - or, an expansion of the leagues already in existence. However, thoughtful insight as to the development of a competitive league based on a high level of ability (apart from professional and University teams) should also be undertaken. Perhaps the expansion of the number of University teams already available may encourage players to continue. Basketball players in particular saw a need for the development of newer leagues with a higher quality of competition. There was little challenge for many basketball players to continue in a league in which the level of overall performance was perceived as being incongruent with their capabilities.

3. This study also points to the value of social relationships and social experiences for the outstanding athlete at high school. If sport is to fulfil one of its espoused educational values; that is,

learning to successfully interact with others in a variety of social situations, then sport at high school must be available to all.

Successful social interaction partly relies on self-confidence, and it is in this sphere that outstanding athletes have an advantage over other athletes or non-participants. Therefore, sports programs must be structured to involve as many individuals as possible, so as to give everyone an equal opportunity to gain success from their own performances. Success is vitally important as it aids in the establishment of self-esteem. Self-esteem in turn enhances self-confidence and is a key asset in many social situations.

4. The study indicates that outstanding athletes considered interschool sport enjoyable. Almost as many claim that interschool sport has important values that the individual can incorporate into his own personality. These include social experiences and self-confidence, the value of competition, and the realization of one's own potential. The implication which can be drawn from this finding is further enhanced by the knowledge that within the Edmonton high school system only one major football and basketball team represents each school. Therefore, this leads to the conclusion that the interschool sports program should be widened. Especially because so many have found enjoyment from interschool sport. This could be done without a reduction in prestige to the already established teams. Why should the élite athletes be the major recipients of enjoyment from interschool sport? The establishment of flag football and an increased number of teams for soccer, basketball, football and volleyball from each school would create enjoyment for more

individuals as well as assisting the suggestion in point 3. The teams mentioned above could be established on a more informal basis, and at different levels of ability than presently exists, but without the necessary reduction in the competitive element.

5. The majority of athletes who have discontinued have shown that they like their former high school sport less than those who are still competing. However, many still like their sport (but not as strongly as previously). The implication of this finding indicates that the high school sports system should be utilizing these former high school athletes. If the interschool sports system was expanded, (as suggested in point 4) these athletes would be of valuable assistance as administrators, coaches, referees and assistants. They are still willing to involve themselves in their former sport as many still desired to play again. Also, many keep in regular contact with their former school to enquire how the team is progressing. The high school system would not only benefit by such an approach, but the athletes' self-esteem would be enhanced. Many former athletes originally reported some conflicts with their jobs, but any motivating device employed by the physical education department in each school, would re-establish the athlete's link with their former school.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this exploratory study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. An in-depth study on role discontinuity of former athletes after high school. Participants and outstanding athletes should be

involved, as a comparative analysis of the factors influencing non-outstanding athletes would enhance the discussion. This type of analysis would provide educators with vital information on why athletes do not pursue their athletic careers. The conclusions to the analyses would then enable the verification, modification or phasing out of inappropriate sporting programs.

2. Another area of interest would be the determination of why occupations seem to restrict athletic participation after high school, as opposed to study (which assists participation). Different levels of sport within the community could be surveyed to provide a wider use of the results. Such levels might include: Professional sports, University sports, Club sports and Recreational activities.

3. A suggestion for future research in this area would be to conduct a study on the readjustment of the athletic fraternity to a different type of lifestyle once their competitive sporting commitments have ceased. A comparison between participants and outstanding athletes could be undertaken with a view to determining, according to athletic ability, the differences in readjustment. Within this framework, the analyses might suggest how these former athletes could be utilized as coaches for athletes in junior sports programs.

4. A longitudinal study on the work already investigated in this study would provide sport sociologists with a valuable insight into the processes occurring within the athlete's life, which in turn, determine the decisions he makes regarding sport. The anticipated investigation would analyze the athlete's sport during his high school years, and for the period after high school until

such time as he discontinues. Variations of this research could be conducted on a short term basis as follows -

(a) The sports participation and role discontinuity of outstanding athletes as compared to non-outstanding athletes;

(b) The sports participation and role discontinuity of outstanding female athletes as compared to outstanding male athletes;

(c) A national study on sports participation and role discontinuity at all levels of competition and for both sexes;

(d) A cross-cultural study on the same bases as for (c).

(e) The carry-over value of "educational" attributes from sport at high school into the lifestyle of the athlete after high school.



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**APPENDICES**



**APPENDIX A**

**INITIAL CONTACT WITH PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS**



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

November 28, 1974

Dear Sir:

I am writing to you in the hope that you might be able to aid me in my thesis research involving the former outstanding athletes in Football and Basketball at your school.

Official approval has been granted for contact with you through the auspices of Ann Purer and the Public/Separate School Boards, and such approval forms should be available through your Principal.

My concern is to locate the former outstanding athletes at your high school in football and basketball from the years 1969 to 1972 (inc.) These two specific sports have been selected because of their popularity at Edmonton High Schools.

You are probably aware that any sample of data should be representative of the total population, therefore, I am endeavoring to gain the same information from every high school in Central Edmonton. From this initial list it is my intention to determine what the former outstanding athlete has done athletically since leaving high school; the effects of his high school status, job and/or study involvement on athletic performance; etc.

I fully realize that your teaching responsibilities are time consuming, but I hope you can find the time to perhaps look through some previous yearbooks in an endeavor to determine the outstanding athletes in the specific years previously mentioned.

I must stress that the athletes so named should be selected because they were outstanding at high school (i.e. not because they have gained athletic fame since high school). If you could indicate their approximate whereabouts, and/or if they have brothers/sisters presently enrolled at your school, this would prove extremely valuable to me. It should also be emphasized that you should be aware that interviews conducted with these named former students will be strictly confidential, as no names will be mentioned in the thesis discussion.

...

I would welcome your reply before the 14th of December as I intend to commence my interviews over the Christmas break. Please find enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope and if you have any definitional problems concerning who is appropriate (outstanding) don't hesitate to contact me. Also, if you would like the results of my study let me know when you reply.

I look forward to your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Sands

RS\*ds

Rob Sands,  
#3B, 9103 - 112th Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Phone 433 - 2034

APPENDIX B  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER



DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Rob Sands  
#3b, 9103 - 112 Street  
EDMONTON, Alberta

Dear Sir:

I am writing to you again in the hope that the vital information concerning former outstanding athletes at your school will reach me for my Thesis data compilation.

I fully realize that your time is limited, as I have also taught for a number of years and have had to cope with the many problems that persist for the Phys-Ed teacher and coach at a high school.

At this stage of my research I have many names at my disposal and can therefore afford to continue my interviews before requiring the names of athletes from your school. Thus, I would welcome your assistance in forwarding names (and approximate addresses) of former outstanding athletes in football and basketball at your school from 1969 - 1972 inclusive before March 1st, 1975.

I hope that this future deadline will provide you with the opportunity to quickly browse through the school yearbooks for the approximate outstanding athletes. Please remember that the athletes selected must have been an outstanding athlete at high school, and not because of the athletic achievements after school.

Once again I have provided a self-stamped addressed envelope for your convenience.

Thank you in anticipation of your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Sands



APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO RESPONDENTS  
AND QUESTIONNAIRE



DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Rob Sands  
#3b, 9103 - 112 Street  
EDMONTON, Alberta

Dear

Your former Physical Education teacher was kind enough to provide me with your name as a former outstanding athlete in football or basketball or both at high school, and I am therefore writing to obtain your assistance in providing research data for my M.A. Thesis at the University of Alberta.

The purpose of the research is to determine if former high school athletes in football or basketball are still playing these sports; if studies and/or jobs are important influences on the continuance of sport after high school, and, to what extent attitudes towards sport differ amongst the individuals interviewed. Social status, aspirations and any trends emerging from the interviews will also be compared in each of the four categories devised for this study. (see below)

You will find enclosed interview forms and a return self-addressed envelope. Section A of these interview forms contains questions relating to your success at high school and Section B refers to your sporting endeavours after high school.

The four sub-sections in Section B are:

- (1) Discontinued (immediately)
- (2) Continued
- (3) Continued, but then Discontinued
- (4) Discontinued, but planning to Continue  
[discontinued immediately after high school, or continued sometime before discontinuing]

For Section B, select the most appropriate category and answer the questions within that section. Any question that is not applicable, please place an N.A. in the space provided for the answer.

Most questions pertain to your former high school sport of football or basketball, but some refer to your sporting interests in general. If you are considered to have been an outstanding athlete in both football and basketball, use the most appropriate categories, and where a question requires two responses place a (B) for basketball and an (F) for football.

If you would care for a summary of the results when I have completed my Thesis, please inform me of your exact address when returning the questionnaires. Any comments on the format of the questionnaire, questions asked, or lack of pertinent questions in specific areas would be most welcome. Thanking you in anticipation of your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Sands

QUESTIONNAIRESECTION A

Tick appropriate response.

Football [ ]

Basketball [ ]

General Background

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_

3a. Married (i) Yes [ ] (ii) No [ ]

b. Played at least 2 years in senior team at High School?  
(i) Yes [ ] (ii) No [ ]

4. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ if student, Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

5. Father's Occupation (be explicit) \_\_\_\_\_

6. High School Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

7. Sports played at High School (Interscholastic level) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Still competing in the same sport(s) as you were an outstanding Athlete in during High School?  
(i) Yes [ ] (ii) No [ ]

9. Competition playing in at present \_\_\_\_\_

10. When did you quit? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Why do you think athletes quit competitive\* sport? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Why do you think champion athletes quit competitive sport? \_\_\_\_\_

High School Participation

13. Why did you start playing sport? \_\_\_\_\_

14. Why did you initially join the (FB/BB) team? \_\_\_\_\_

15. What characteristics do you think an individual has to possess to be an outstanding athlete? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Was there any evidence provided by anyone at high school to suggest that you were an outstanding athlete?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\*refers to specific competitive league

17. Do you consider that you were an outstanding (FB/BB) athlete?

(i) Yes ☐ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Did you want to become a "champion" athlete?

(i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Not Sure ☐

(iii) Did not Enter Thoughts ☐

(iv) No ☐

If yes, how strong was this desire?

(i) Very Strong ☐ Explain briefly \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Strong ☐

(iii) Moderate ☐

(iv) Very Little ☐

19. Did you enjoy playing (FB/BB) at High School?

(i) Yes ☐ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

20. Do you think you could have been a better player at High School than you were?

(i) Yes ☐ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

21. Did you receive any encouragement to do well in (FB/BB)?

(i) Yes ☐ Who? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Both ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

22. Did your coach like you?

(i) Yes ☐ Why? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

23. What part did your coach play in your High School success?

(i) Large ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Moderate ☐

(iii) Small ☐

(iv) None ☐

24. If an outside (not your High School coach) coach, what part did he play in your High School success?

(i) Large ☐ Who was he? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Moderate ☐

(iii) Small ☐

(iv) None ☐



25. Did your coach give you advice about attending University?

(1) Often [ ]

(2) Seldom [ ]

(3) Never [ ]

26. Has your coach been an influence on your life in any way?

(1) great [ ] What ways? \_\_\_\_\_

(2) some [ ]

(3) little [ ]

(4) none [ ]

27. Did you receive any extra privileges because of your "outstanding" status as an athlete? (i) Yes (ii) No Briefly explain

Study [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Financial [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Close Friends [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Others [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

28. Was there any evidence of resentment by other students towards your athletic success at High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

29. Were there any personal sacrifices that you had to make to participate in (FB/BB) at High School?

(i) Large (ii) Small (iii) None Briefly explain

Study [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Job [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Financial [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Romantic Life [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Family Life [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

General Social Life [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Others [ ] [ ] [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

30. Do you think you gained anything out (benefits) of sport at High School as an outstanding athlete in (FB/BB)?

(i) Yes [ ] Gains? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

31. Are there any values to be gained for the individual by participating in Interscholar sports?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SECTION B

All questions are directed towards your sport after high school.

(1) DISCONTINUED (immediately)

1. List the following in order of importance to you at this stage in your life: Job; Study; Sport Briefly explain your reasons

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why did you discontinue playing (FB/BB)? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Other Contributing Factors \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your feelings toward your former High School sport of (FB/BB)?

Explain

(i) strongly like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) little interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iv) no interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (v) hate [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

5. Was your attitude toward (FB/BB) influenced by anyone after High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Who? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ]

6. Did your studies have an effect upon your decision to discontinue?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

if Yes, was an attempt made to achieve in both

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did your job have an effect upon your decision to discontinue?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you still work out in any sport at a competitive level?

(i) Yes [ ] Sports \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ]

if No, is your experience in sport at High School a direct reason for your discontinuance.

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

9. How many hours a week do you devote to sport now? (Use average hours per week over the last year)

hours playing \_\_\_\_\_

hours watching; listening; reading \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you keep in contact with your former team mates from High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ]

11. Do you keep in contact with the (FB/BB) team at your former High School?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

12. If married, what affect has your marriage had on your sporting career?

Explain

(i) Help [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Hindrance [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) No Difference [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

13. How do you feel now that you are no longer the recognized athlete you were at High School?

Explain

(i) Highly upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Slightly upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) Not worried [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

14. Has your discontinuance in your former sport created any problems in your life?

Explain

(i) Yes [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

if Yes, are there any greater problems to face because you were an outstanding athlete?

Explain

(i) Yes [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you still wish you were playing (FB/BB)?  
 (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
16. Do you still have any ambitions to achieve in sport in general?  
 (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you think people sacrifice anything to play competitive sport?  
 (i) Yes ☐ What is sacrificed? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
if Yes, are these sacrifices worth the effect?  
 (i) Yes ☐  
 (ii) No ☐
18. Has success in sport at any stage in your life benefited you in your "everyday-life"?  
 (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
19. Do you think you gained anything out of sport after High School because you were a former outstanding High School football player or Basketball player, or both?  
 (i) Yes ☐ What gains? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

(2) CONTINUED

1. List the following in order of importance to you at this stage of your life: Job; Study; Sport. Briefly explain your reasons
- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |
2. Why are you still playing (FB/BB)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are your reasons for continuing the same as for those for your initial entry into (FB/BB) at High School?  
 (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_



4. Do you still enjoy playing (FB/BB) to the same extent as at High School?
- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
5. If you didn't enjoy (FB/BB) at High School, are you now?
- (i) Yes ☐ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What are your feelings towards (FB/BB)?
- (i) strongly like ☐ Briefly explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) like ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) little interest ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) no interest ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) hate ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
7. Was your attitude towards (FB/BB) influenced by anyone after High School?
- (i) Yes ☐ Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are there any advantages in being a former outstanding athlete in your present level of competition?
- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are there any disadvantages in being a former outstanding athlete in your present level of competition?
- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
10. Does study interfere with the participation in your sport?
- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
11. Does your job interfere with your participation in your sport?
- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
12. Do you consider that you are playing in a higher level of competition than at your High School?
- (i) Yes ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_



if Yes, did you feel inferior as an athlete when joining your current team?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

if Yes, did you attempt to overcome this feeling of inferiority?

(i) Yes [ ] How? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

13. Evaluate your performance when joining your current team.

(i) improve [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) deteriorate [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) no difference [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

14. Has participation in (FB/BB) created any problems in your life?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

if Yes, do you have any greater problems to face because you were a former outstanding High School athlete?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

15. Is it more difficult to continue (FB/BB) now than a few years ago?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

16. Do you think people sacrifice anything to play competitive sport?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

17. Did you make any sacrifices to play (FB/BB) after High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

18. Are these sacrifices worth the effort?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

19. How many hours do you devote to sport now? (Average hours per week during season)
- hours playing \_\_\_\_\_
- hours watching; listening; reading \_\_\_\_\_
20. If married, what effect has your marriage had on your sporting career?
- (i) Help [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) Hindrance [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) No Difference [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
21. Has success in sport at any stage in your life benefited you in your "everyday life"?
- (i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
22. Do you think you gained anything out of sport after High School because you were a former outstanding High School football player, or basketball player, or both?
- (i) Yes [ ] Explain gains \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No [ ] Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

(3) CONTINUED, BUT THEN DISCONTINUED

1. List the following in order of importance to you at this stage in your life: Job; Study; Sport

Briefly explain your reasons

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. What competition did you last play in? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why did you continue to play after High School? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long did you play for before deciding to discontinue?
- (i) 1 - 3 months [ ]
- (ii) 4 - 6 months [ ]
- (iii) 7 - 12 months [ ]
- (iv) Over 12 months [ ]
5. Why did you eventually discontinue? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Other contributing factors \_\_\_\_\_

7. What are your aspirations in sport now? \_\_\_\_\_

8. What are your feelings toward your former sport?

Briefly explain

- (i) strongly like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) little interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iv) no interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
 (v) hate [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

9. Was your attitude towards (FB/BB) influenced by anyone after High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

10. Did your studies have any effect on your decision to discontinue?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

if Yes, was an attempt made to achieve in both?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

11. Did your job have any effect on your decision to discontinue?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

if Yes, was an attempt made to achieve in both?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you still work out in any competitive sport?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

if No, is your experience in sport at High School a direct reason for your discontinuance?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

13. How many hours do you devote to sport now? (Average hours per week, over the last year)

hours playing \_\_\_\_\_

hours watching; listening; reading \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you keep in contact with your former (FB/BB) team mates from High School?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

15. Do you keep in contact with your former (FB/BB) High School team?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

16. If married, what affect has your marriage had on your sporting career?

(i) Help [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Hindrance [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) No Difference [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

17. How do you feel now that you are no longer the recognized outstanding athlete you were at High School?

Explain

(i) Highly upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Slightly upset [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) Not worried [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

18. Has your discontinuance in (FB/BB) created any problems in your life?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

19. When you joined your new team after High School, were you playing in a higher level of competition (than that at High School)?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

20. Evaluate your performance in (FB/BB) after High School.

(i) Improve [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Deteriorate [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) No Difference [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

21. Did you feel inferior as an athlete when you joined your new team after High School?

(1) Yes [ ]

(11) No [ ]

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

22. Do you think people sacrifice anything to play competitive sport?

(1) Yes [ ]

(11) No [ ]

23. Did you sacrifice anything in order to play your sport (FB/BB) after High School?

(1) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(11) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

24. Are these sacrifices worth the effort?

(1) Yes [ ]

(11) No [ ]

25. Has success in sport at any stage in your life benefited you in your "everyday life"?

(1) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(11) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

26. Do you still wish you were playing (FB/BB)?

(1) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(11) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

27. Do you think you gained anything out of sport after High School because you were a former outstanding High School football player, or basketball player, or both?

(1) Yes [ ] Explain gains \_\_\_\_\_

(11) No [ ] Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

(4) DISCONTINUED, BUT PLANNING TO CONTINUE

1. List the following in order of importance to you at this stage in your life: Job; Study; Sport

Briefly explain your reasons

- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |



2. Why did you discontinue playing (FB/BB)? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Other contributing factors \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why do you plan to return to (FB/BB)? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What level of competition do you plan to return to? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are your reasons for returning to (FB/BB) different from those reasons for first taking up this sport at High School?
- (i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
7. What are your aspirations in sport now? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What are your feelings toward your former sport?  
Briefly explain
- (i) strongly like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) like [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) little interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
- (iv) no interest [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
- (v) hate [ ] \_\_\_\_\_
9. Was your attitude towards (FB/BB) influenced by anyone after High School?
- (i) Yes [ ] Who? \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) No
10. Did your studies have any effect upon your decision to discontinue?
- (i) Yes [ ]
- (ii) No [ ]
- if Yes, was an attempt made to achieve in both?
- (i) Yes [ ]
- (ii) No [ ]
- Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_
11. Did your job have any effect on your decision to discontinue?
- (i) Yes [ ]
- (ii) No [ ]
- if Yes, was an attempt made to achieve in both?
- (i) Yes [ ]
- (ii) No [ ]
- Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you still work out in any sport at a competitive level?

(i) Yes ☐ Sports \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐

If No, is your experience in sport at High School a direct reason for your discontinuance?

(i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐

13. How many hours a week do you devote to sport now? (Use average hours per week over the last year)

hours playing \_\_\_\_\_

hours watching; listening; reading \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you keep in contact with your former (FB/BB) team mates from High School?

(i) Yes ☐ Reasons \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐

15. Do you keep in contact with the (FB/BB) team at your former High School?

(i) Yes ☐ Reasons \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No ☐

16. If married, what effect has your marriage had on your sporting career?

(i) Help ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Hindrance ☐

(iii) No Difference ☐

17. How do you feel now that you are no longer the recognized athlete you were at High School?

Explain

(i) Highly upset ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Upset ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Slightly upset ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) Not worried ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

18. Has your discontinuance in your former sport created any problems in your life?

(i) Yes ☐

(ii) No ☐

if Yes, are there any greater problems to face because you were an outstanding athlete?

- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

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 The next section applies to the athletes who participated after High School but discontinued.  
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19. When you left High School and joined your new team, did you consider the competition to be a higher level than your school team?

- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

20. Evaluate your performance after joining your new team.

- (i) Improve ☐ Reasons \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) Deteriorate ☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (iii) No Difference ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

21. Did you feel inferior as an athlete when joining your new team after High School?

- (i) Yes ☐  
 (ii) No ☐

if Yes, did you attempt to overcome this feeling?

- (i) Yes ☐ How? \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☒

Result of attempt \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
 22. Do you still wish you were playing (FB/BB)?

- (i) Yes ☐ Reasons \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

23. Do you think people sacrifice anything to play competitive sport?

- (i) Yes ☐ Reasons/Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

24. Did you make any sacrifices to play your sport after High School?

- (i) Yes ☐ Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 (ii) No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

25. Are these sacrifices worth the effort?

(i) Yes [ ]

(ii) No [ ]

26. Has success in sport at any stage in your life benefited you in your "everyday life"?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] \_\_\_\_\_

27. Do you think you gained anything out of sport after High School because you were a former outstanding High School football player, or basketball player, or both?

(i) Yes [ ] Explain gains \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) No [ ] Why not? \_\_\_\_\_